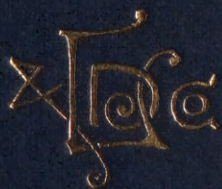
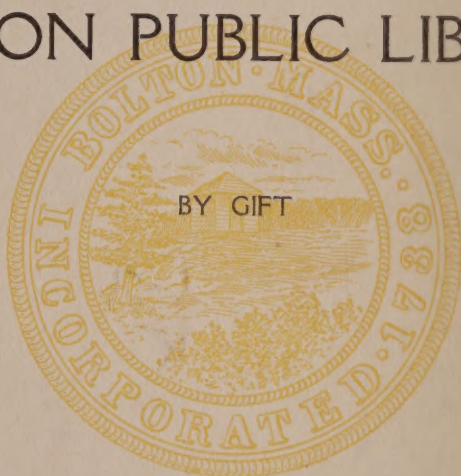


·THROUGH·THE·YEAR·WITH·THE·POETS·

·EDITED·BY·
·OSCAR·FAY·ADAMS·



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MARCH



EDITED BY

OSCAR FAY ADAMS

On these debatable borders of the year
Spring's foot half falters; scarce she yet may know
The leafless blackthorn blossom from the snow;
And through her bowers the wind's way still is clear.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.
The House of Life.

BOSTON

D. LOTHROP AND COMPANY

FRANKLIN AND HAWLEY STREETS

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PREFACE.

THE aspect of the first month of spring varies perhaps more widely, as to isothermal conditions, than that of any other month, presenting here the stern front of winter, and there the genial face of May. For this reason, therefore, a volume which attempts to include the poetry of March must present many seeming inconsistencies, and fail to prove entirely satisfactory to all readers. He who, during this month, looks from his windows into a blinding snowstorm will be apt to fancy that references to primroses and daffodils in such a season are far from apposite; while he upon whom shines a warmer sun may be disposed to consider the allusions to lingering winter equally wanting in pertinence. Local criticism of this character the editor of course cannot expect to escape; but he hopes to be credited with the desire to present a comprehensive idea of March as the poets have seen it.

The many admirers of Mrs. Moulton's verse will read with interest the sonnet, "By March Wind Led," which she has kindly written for this volume; and Mrs. Jane G. Austin's "March," also an original contribution, will

doubtless find an appreciative audience. "A Masque of March," which the author, Mr. Clinton Scollard, has generously allowed the editor the first use of, will not fail to arrest the attention of thoughtful readers; and the dainty quatrain, "The Gift of Spring," that Mr. Charles Miner Thompson has contributed, will be sure to please.

The editor's thanks are once more due to the many authors whose ready co-operation with him has been of such material assistance; and the publishers again express their acknowledgments to Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.; Chas. Scribner's Sons; Cupples, Upham & Co.; Roberts Brothers; Ticknor & Co.; Lee & Shepard; J. B. Lippincott Co.; Jansen, McClurg & Co.; and the Century Company; and also to Mr. Parke Godwin, for the use of several extracts from the poems of William Cullen Bryant; Mr. P. M. Hale, for the poem by Henry Timrod; and to Miss Emily C. Weeks, for the permission to include a poem by her brother, the late Robert Kelley Weeks.

CAMBRIDGE, MASS., January 31, 1886.

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Born in Cockermouth, Cumberland, England, April 7, 1770.

Died in Rydal Mount, Westmoreland, England, April 23, 1850.

In March 118

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UNKNOWN.

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MARCH.

IN FIERCE MARCH WEATHER.

*In fierce March weather
White waves break tether,
And whirled together
At either hand,
Like weeds uplifted,
The tree-trunks rifted
In spars are drifted,
Like foam or sand,
Past swamp and shallow,
And reed-beds callow,
Through pool and shallow,
To wind and lee,
Till, no more tongue-tied,
Full tide and young tide
Roar down the rapids and storm the sea.*

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.
Winter in Northumberland.

MARCH.

IN EARLIEST SPRING.

Tossing his mane of snows in wildest eddies and
tangles,

Lion-like, March cometh in, hoarse, with tempest-
uous breath,

Through all the moaning chimneys, and thwart all
the hollows and angles

Round the shuddering house, threatening of winter
and death.

But in my heart I feel the life of the wood and the
meadow

Thrilling the pulses that own kindred with fibres
that lift

Bud and blade to the sunward, within the inscruta-
ble shadow,

Deep in the oak's chill core, under the gathering
drift.

Nay, to earth's life in mine some prescience, or
dream, or desire

(How shall I name it aright?) comes for a mo-
ment and goes, —

Rapture of life ineffably perfect, — as if in the
brier,

Leafless there by my door, trembled a sense of
the rose.

WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS.

MARCH.

BENEATH the sheltering walls the thin snow clings, —

Dead winter's skeleton, left bleaching, white,

Disjointed, crumbling, on unfriendly fields.

The inky pools surrender tardily

At noon, to patient herds, a frosty drink

From jagged rims of ice; a subtle red

Of life is kindling every twig and stalk

Of lowly meadow growths; the willows wrap

Their stems in furry white; the pines grow gray

A little in the biting wind; midday

Brings tiny burrowed creatures, peeping out

Alert for sun. Ah March! we know thou art

Kind-hearted, spite of ugly looks and threats,

And, out of sight, art nursing April's violets!

MRS. HELEN MARIA [FISKE] [HUNT] JACKSON.

THE MARCH WINDS.

IN March come the March winds,
They blow and blow,
But just what they come for
I hardly know;
A heigh-ho!

IN March come the March winds,
They blow and blow,
They sweep up the brown leaves
That green ones may grow;
Aha! a heigh-ho!

GEORGE WASHINGTON WRIGHT HOUGHTON.

A SPRING GROWL.

WOULD you think it? Spring has come.
Winter's paid his passage home;
Packed his ice-box, — gone — half way
To the Arctic Pole, they say.
But I know the old ruffian still
Skulks about from hill to hill,
Where his freezing footprints cling,
Though 'tis Spring.

Heed not what the poets sing
In their rhymes about the Spring.
Spring was once a potent queen,
Robed in blossoms and in green.

That, I think, was long ago.
Is she buried in the snow,
Deaf to all our caroling,
Poor old Spring?

Windows rattling in the night;
Shutters that you thought were tight
Slamming back against the wall;
Ghosts of burglars in the hall;
Roaring winds and groaning trees;
Chimneys shuddering in the breeze;
Doleful dumps in everything, —
Such is Spring.

Sunshine trying hard awhile
On the bare brown fields to smile;
Frozen ruts and slippery walks;
Gray old crops of last year's stalks;
Shivering hens and moping cows;
Curdled sap in leafless boughs
Nipped by Winter's icy sting, —
Such is Spring.

Yet the other day I heard
Something that I thought a bird.
He was brave to come so soon;
But his pipes were out of tune,
And he chirped as if each note
Came from flannels round his throat,
And he had no heart to sing,
Ah, poor thing!

If there comes a little thaw,
Still the air is chill and raw.
Here and there a patch of snow,
Dirtier than the ground below,
Dribbles down a marshy flood;
Ankle-deep you stick in mud
In the meadows, — while you sing,
“This is Spring.”

Are there violets in the sod,
Crocuses beneath the clod?
When will Boreas give us peace?
Or has Winter signed a lease
For another month of frost,
Leaving Spring to pay the cost?
For it seems he still is king,
Though 'tis Spring.

CHRISTOPHER PEARSE CRANCH.

FIRST OF MARCH.

(CORFU AND LONDON.)

THIS day of sleet and evil cheer
How different dawned that happy year,
Revealing through the pearly haze
The blue divine Ionian bays.
How bright beneath Phæacian trees
Anemone and iris glowed,

The olives scattering in the breeze
Dark fruit upon the flowery road.

Ionian earth, Ionian sea
Are vanished from me utterly;
The dull roofs drip, almost it seems
The sea and earth were only dreams.

So long the wide and deathlike wings
Of winter have possessed the land,
Almost our souls all lovely things
Remember not nor understand.

Nay yet wait on, the tardy smile
Of Nature to our weary isle
Shall reach, and make us kin once more
To that rejoicing southern shore.

Ourselves shall feel some morn in May
As felt Alcæus hearkening,

When in the Lesbian dales he lay
And heard the footsteps of the spring.

ERNEST MYERS.

MARCH.

. . . MARCH, black-robed in storm,
The dread of homebound ships,
Who flies over lands and waters
With a trumpet at her lips.

EDGAR FAWCETT.
The Masque of Months.

THE FIRST OF MARCH.

THROUGH the gaunt woods the winds are shrilling
cold,

Down from the rifted rack the sunbeam pours
Over the cold gray slopes, and stony moors :
The glimmering watercourse, the eastern wold,
And over it the whirling sail o' the mill,
The lonely hamlet with its mossy spire,
The piled city smoking like a pyre,
Fetched out of shadow gleam with light as chill.

The young leaves pine, their early promise stayed ;
The hope-deluded sorrow at the sight
Of the sweet blossoms by the treacherous light
Flattered to death, like tender love betrayed ;
And stepdames frown, and aged virgins chide ;
Relentless hearts put on their iron mood ;
The hunter's dog lies dreaming of the wood,
And dozes barking by the ingleside.

Larks twitter, martins glance, and curs from far
Rage down the wind, and straight are heard no
more ;
Old wives peep out, and scold, and bang the
door ;
And clanging clocks grow angry in the air ;
Sorrow and care, perplexity and pain,
Frown darker shadows on the homeless one,
And the gray beggar buffeting alone
Pleads in the howling storm, and pleads in vain.

The field fires smoke along the champaign drear,
And drive before the north wind, streaming down
Bleak hill, and furrow dark, and fallow brown ;
Few living things along the land appear ;
The weary horse looks out, his mane estray,
With anxious fetlock and uneasy eye,
And sees the market carts go madly by
With sidelong drivers reckless of the way.

The sere beech leaves, that trembled dry and red
All the long winter on the frosty bough,
Or slept in quiet underneath the snow,
Fly off, like resurrections of the dead ;
The horny plowman, and his yokèd ox,
Wink at the icy blasts ; and beldames bold,
Stout and red-hooded, flee before the cold ;
And children's eyes are blinded by the shocks.

You cannot hear the waters for the wind ;
The brook that foams, and falls, and bubbles by,
Hath lost its voice : but ancient steeples sigh,
And belfries moan, — and crazy ghosts, confined
In dark courts, weep, and shake the shuddering
gates,
And cry from points of windy pinnacles,
Howl through the bars, and 'plain among the
bells,
And shriek and wail like voices of the Fates !

And who is He that down the mountain side,
Swift as a shadow flying from the sun,

Between the wings of stormy winds doth run,
With fierce blue eyes, and eyebrows knit with pride ;
Though now and then I see sweet laughter play
Upon his lips, like moments of bright heaven
Thrown 'twixt the cruel blasts of morn and even,
And golden locks beneath his hood of gray ?

Sometimes he turns him back to wave farewell
To his pale sire with icy beard and hair ;
Sometimes he sends before him through the air
A cry of welcome down a sunny dell ;
And while the echoes are around him ringing,
Sudden the angry wind breathes low and sweet,
Young violets show their blue eyes at his feet,
And the wild lark is heard above him singing !

FREDERICK TENNYSON.

MARCH.

CLOUDS in towering tumult loom :
Sunny onsets dash the gloom ;
Bold burly March, he laughs to do it ;
Yon showery drift, he whistles through it ;
Breaks in wild glee the rainbow's horns ;
Hangs drops of glory on the points of thorns ;
But, o'er yon sower on the slope,
Breathes blessing through his thin white dust of
hope.

THOMAS AIRD.
Songs of the Seasons.

SPRING.

COME to the woods, O Spring !
 Touch the gray silence, smite the winter's gloom,
 Till the dim aisles grow bright with sudden bloom
 And the fair arches ring.

Come ! we have waited long ;
 And in the balmy fragrance of thy mouth
 Bring us God's message from the sunny south ;
 Waken the wild bird's song.

Over the meadows pass,
 Flinging the wealth of May buds, faintly sweet,
 In shining garlands round the children's feet
 Amid the springing grass.

• • • • •
 MRS. MARY ELIZABETH [McGRATH] BLAKE.

MARCH.

I MARTIUS am ! Once first, and now the third !
 To lead the Year was my appointed place ;
 A mortal dispossessed me by a word,
 And set there Janus with the double face.
 Hence I make war on all the human race ;
 I shake the cities with my hurricanes ;
 I flood the rivers and their banks efface,
 And drown the farms and hamlets with my rains.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.
The Poet's Calendar.

WINTER AND SPRING.

SHOUT and sing for the Spring is here !
Laugh and dance for Winter's away !
Snow laps him round on his icy bier
Where cold winds mourn for him night and day.
Though he has been so slow to die,
At last, at last we hail his death ;
His kingly state is all laid by
And in his room Spring flourisheth.

Sing if you will that Spring is here,
But heave a sigh for Winter away ;
Poor Winter that was Spring last year,
Though now he lies so cold and gray.
For still and dead as he doth lie,
Struck to the heart with Spring's first breath,
Shall this young year and thou and I,
With all our singing, dumb in death.

AGNES MARY FRANCES ROBINSON.

THE DAWN OF SPRING.

THE season comes when, from her three months'
trance,
The earth awakes : already her deep heart
Begins to stir, and send its life abroad.
On slopes which lie adjacent to the sun,
The snows grow thin and vanish, and the air

Is scented with the odors of the mould ;
For there the Spring, with warm and delicate feet,
Fresh from her hidden caverns of perfume,
Walks in the noon to wake the early flowers.
Here the first bird begins the woodlands' song ;
But in yon maple grove, where genial airs
Are earliest to blow, and last to leave,
A louder voice is heard. The auger there
Passes from tree to tree, and deals the wound
Whence flows the saccharine crystal into troughs,
Propt at the great trunks' feet ; while overhead
The squirrel swings, and looks in wonder down.
And now begins the pleasurable toil
Which tends the sugar-camp. The fire is built :
All day the smoke rolls through the antique boughs,
All night the blaze illumines the forest depths !

THOMAS BUCHANAN READ.
The New Pastoral.

THE FIRST OF MARCH.

THE bud is in the bough, and the leaf is in the bud,
And earth's beginning now in her veins to feel the
 blood,
Which, warmed by summer suns in the alembic of
 the vine,
From her founts will overrun in a ruddy gush of
 wine.

The perfume and the bloom that shall decorate the
flower,
Are quickening in the gloom of their subterranean
bower;
And the juices meant to feed trees, vegetables and
fruits,
Unerringly proceed to their pre-appointed roots.

How awful is the thought of the wonders under-
ground,
Of the mystic changes wrought in the silent, dark
profound;
How each thing upward tends by necessity decreed,
And a world's support depends on the shooting of a
seed!

The summer's in her ark, and this sunny-pinioned
day
Is commissioned to remark whether winter holds her
sway;
Go back, thou dove of peace, with the myrtle on thy
wing,
Say, that floods and tempests cease and the world
is ripe for spring.

Thou hast fanned the sleeping earth till her dreams
are all of flowers,
And the waters look in mirth for their overhanging
bowers;

The forest seems to listen for the rustle of its
leaves,
And the very skies to glisten in the hope of summer
eves.

The vivifying spell has been felt beneath the wave,
By the dormouse in its cell, and the mole within its
cave ;
And the summer tribes that creep, or in air expand
their wing,
Have started from their sleep at the summons of the
spring.

The cattle lift their voices from the valleys and the
hills,
And the feathered race rejoices with a gush of tune-
ful bills,
And if this cloudless arch fills the poet's song with
glee,
O thou sunny first of March ! be it dedicate to thee.
HORACE SMITH.

MARCH.

THE stormy March is come at last,
With wind, and cloud, and changing skies ;
I hear the rushing of the blast,
That through the snowy valley flies.

Ah, passing few are they who speak,
Wild, stormy month ! in praise of thee ;
Yet, though thy winds are loud and bleak,
Thou art a welcome month to me.

For thou, to northern lands, again
The glad and glorious sun dost bring,
And thou hast joined the gentle train
And wear'st the gentle name of Spring.

And, in thy reign of blast and storm,
Smiles many a long, bright, sunny day,
When the changed winds are soft and warm,
And heaven puts on the blue of May.

Then sing aloud the gushing rills
In joy that they again are free,
And, brightly leaping down the hills,
Begin their journey to the sea.

The year's departing beauty hides
Of wintry storms the sullen threat ;
But in thy sternest frown abides
A look of kindly promise yet.

Thou bring'st the hope of those calm skies,
And that soft time of sunny showers,
When the wide bloom, on earth that lies,
Seems of a brighter world than ours.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

BLOW, WILD MARCH WINDS.

BLOW, wild March wind ! In hollows of the lea,
In copses low, thy bride awaiteth thee,
The timid, saint-like, white anemone.
She will not show her face, though wooed by kings,
Till o'er her beat the pulsings of thy wings.

Blow, wild March wind ! that we her face may see,
Through pine-clad gorges by our northward sea,
Through English woodlands where the blackcap
sings.

Blow, wild March wind !

She lifts her face. The answering passion stings
Her veinèd leaves, at the rough kiss he brings.
Sing round her bridal couch thy melody,
Thy breath is life to her. Apart from thee
She droops and dies, the frailest of frail things :

Blow, wild March wind !

WILLIAM WILSEY MARTIN.

MARCH.

THERE is no month so fair a type of life
In its first conscious strength and joy of strife
As thou, wild moon of March !
Thou with thy hurtling storms and soft blue sky
Within whose depths the great white cumuli
Sleep under heaven's arch.

Thou with thy swift chill winds that snatch the
breath

From pouting lips, and swoop to grewsome death

The sailor and his ship,

And then in sudden sunburst triumphing

Make rainbows in the shining drops that cling

Upon his frozen lip.

I love thee well, nay, but I love thee not,

How can I tell if I do love or not,

Unstable and untrue !

The raging lion now, and now the lamb,

The winter's blast, laden with springtide balm

O wild March, which is you ?

A type of life, yea, of thy life, O friend !

And yet I know not thy life to the end :

Thy life holds better things.

And March holds May, and May sweet summertime,

And summer dies and in its death sublime

The grain of autumn brings.

MRS. JANE [GOODWIN] AUSTIN.

SNOWDROPS.

HAVE you heard the snowdrops ringing

Their bells to themselves ?

Smaller and whiter than the singing

Of any fairy elves

Who follow Mab, their queen,
When she is winging
On a moth across the night
And calls them all
With a far-twinkling call
Like the tiniest ray of tiniest starlight
That ever was seen?

Far and near, high and low,
Don't you hear the little bells go?
Not in the big winds that blow
The roaring beeches to and fro,
Not in the lower rivers
Of the breeze
Below the trees,
When the stiff bracken shines
And the thin bent quivers,
And the limp green waves to and fro,
You shall hear the little bells go,

But in the jets and rivulets
That sputter from the melting snows,
When against the mighty bole
Of a beech they dash and swirl
And twist and twirl,
The licking leaves throw
A thousand airy drops invisible
Down the strong perpendicular
To where the snowdrops are ;
Tiny drops that fall and melt,
And, swift and sweet,

Run dim viewless course of fitful force ;
Like an airy waterfall
You shall hear the little bells go,
All the tiny snowbells swinging,
Tiny chauntlets high and low.

SYDNEY THOMPSON DOBELL.

MARCH.

" March. Its tree, Juniper. Its stone, Blood-stone. Its motto, ' Courage and strength in times of danger.' " — OLD SAYING.

IN the gray dawning across the white lake,
Where the ice-hummocks in frozen waves break,
Mid the glittering spears of the far Northern Lights,
Like a cavalry escort of steel-coated knights,
Spanning the winter's cold gulf with an arch,
Over it, rampant, rides in the wild March.

Galloping, galloping, galloping in,
Into the world with stir and a din,
The north wind, the east wind, and west wind
together,

Inbringing, inbringing the March's wild weather.

Hear his rough chant as he dashes along :

" Ho, ye March children, come list to my song !

A bold outlaw am I both to do and to dare,

And I fear not old earth nor the powers of the air ;

Winter's a dotard, and Summer's a prude,

But Spring loves me well, although I am rude.

Fluttering, lingering, listening Spring, —
Blushing she waits for the clang and the ring
Of my swift horse's hoofs; then forward she
presses,
Repelling, returning, my boisterous caresses.

“The winds are unbound and loose in the sky,
Rioting, frolicking, madly on high:
Are ye able to cope with the North Wind's strong
arm?

Welcome boldly his fierce grasp; t'will do ye no
harm.

He knows the children of March are my own,
Sealed with my signet of magic blood-stone.

Blood-stone, red blood-stone, green dark and red
light, —

Blood is for ardor and stone is for might;
And the watchword borne on by West Wind, the
ranger,

Is, ‘courage and strength in the moment of
danger.’

“Children of March, are ye strong, are ye strong?
Shame not the flag the West Wind bears along;
O ye men of the March! be ye firm as the steel;
O ye women of March! be ye loyal and leal:
Strong in your loving and strong in your hate,
Constant, like juniper, early and late.

Juniper, juniper, juniper green,
Berries of blue set in glittering sheen,

In the winter's cold snow, in summer's hot
splendor,
Unchanging, unchanging, thou heart true and
tender!"

Singing of juniper, forward he whirled,
Gallopings, gallopings on through the world;
And when shivering, waking, the dull Day gazed out
From her tower in the grey clouds, she heard but
the shout

Of the riotous winds as they followed in glee,
On, on to the wooing in mad revelry.

Wooing, the wooing, the wooing of Spring:
Here's a bold wooing that makes the woods ring,
And thrills the leaf buds, though with snow over-
laden,
As March, the wild outlaw, bears off the Spring
maiden.

CONSTANCE FENIMORE WOOLSON.

A BATTLE OF THE ELEMENTS.

THE warring hosts of Winter and of Spring
Are hurtling o'er the plains.
All night I heard their battle-clarions ring,
And jar the window-panes.

The arrowy sleet is rattling on the glass;
The sky a vault of stone;

The untimely snows besiege the sprouting grass ;
The elm-trees toss and moan.

Their swelling buds curl backward as they swing ;
The crocus in its sheath
Listens, a watchful sentinel, till Spring
Shall melt the snow's last wreath.

The saddened robins flit through leafless trees,
And chirp with tuneless voice,
And wait the conquering sun, the unbinding breeze ;
They cannot yet rejoice.

Slowly the victor Spring her foe outflanks,
And countermines his snows ;
Then, unawares, along the grassy banks
Her ambushed violets throws.

Soon will she mask with buds of fragrant white
Her arsenals of thorns,
And lift her rosebush banners to the light
Of soul-entrancing morns.

Along the fields her fairy troops shall hide,
And conquer by their grace,
And shake their flowery crests, and far and wide
The surly frosts displace ;

Till all the woods are ringing with the glee
And prophecy of change

That melts the past and sets the present free
Through Summer's perfect range.

CHRISTOPHER PEARSE CRANCH.

MARCH.

HARK! for March thereto doth follow,
Blithe, — a herald tabarded;
O'er him flies the shifting swallow;
Hark! for March thereto doth follow.
Swift his horn, by holt and hollow,
Wakes the flowers in winter dead.

HENRY AUSTIN DOBSON.

The Masque of the Months.

SPRING.

"*With a difference.*" — HAMLET.

AGAIN the bloom, the northward flight,
The fount freed at its silver height,
And down the deep woods to the lowest,
The fragrant shadows scarred with light.

O inescapable joy of spring!
For thee the world shall leap and sing;
But by her darkened door thou goest
Forever as a spectral thing.

LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY.

MARCH CROCUSES.

O FICKLE and uncertain March,
How could you have the heart,
To make the tender crocuses
From their beds untimely start?

Those foolish, unsuspecting flowers,
Too credulous to see
That the sweetest promises of March
Are not May's certainty.

When you smiled a few short hours ago,
What said your whisper, light,
That made them lift their pretty heads
So hopeful and so bright?

I could not catch a single word,
But I saw your light caress;
And heard your rough voice softened down
To a lover's tenderness.

O cruel and perfidious month,
It makes me sick and sad,
To think how yesterday your smile
Made all the blossoms glad!

O trustful, unsuspecting flowers,
It breaks my heart to know,
That all your golden heads to-day
Are underneath the snow!

PHEBE CARY.

THE LITTLE PEOPLE OF THE SNOW.

. . . WHEN the spring came on, what terror reigned
 Among these Little People of the Snow!
 To them the sun's warm beams were shafts of fire,
 And the soft south wind was the wind of death.
 Away they flew, all with a pretty scowl
 Upon their childish faces, to the north,
 Or scampered upward to the mountain's top,
 And there defied their enemy, the Spring;
 Skipping and dancing on the frozen peaks,
 And moulding little snowballs in their palms,
 And rolling them, to crush her flowers below,
 Down the steep snow-fields.

.
 WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

MARCH.

SLAYER of winter, art thou here again?
 O welcome, thou that bring'st the summer nigh!
 The bitter wind makes not thy victory vain,
 Nor will we mock thee for thy faint blue sky.
 Welcome, O March! whose kindly days and dry
 Make April ready for the throstle's song,
 Thou first redresser of the winter's wrong!

Yea, welcome March! and though I die ere June,
 Yet for the hope of life I give thee praise,

Striving to swell the burden of the tune
 That even now I hear thy brown birds raise,
 Unmindful of the past or coming days;
 Who sing: "O joy! a new year is begun:
 What happiness to look upon the sun!"

Ah, what begetteth all this storm of bliss
 But Death himself, who crying solemnly,
 E'en from the heart of sweet Forgetfulness,
 Bids us "Rejoice, lest treasureless ye die.
 Within a little time must ye go by.
 Stretch forth your open hands, and while ye live
 Take all the gifts that Death and Life may give."

WILLIAM MORRIS.
The Earthly Paradise.

INVOCATION TO SPRING.

COME, gentle Spring, ethereal mildness, come;
 And from the bosom of your dropping cloud,
 While music wakes around, veiled in a shower
 Of shadowing roses, on our plains descend.

.
 And see where surly Winter passes off,
 Far to the north, and calls his ruffian blasts:
 His blasts obey, and quit the howling hill,
 The shattered forest, and the ravished vale;
 While softer gales succeed, at whose kind touch,
 Dissolving snows in livid torrents lost,

The mountains lift their green heads to the sky.
As yet the trembling year is unconfirmed,
And Winter oft at eve resumes the breeze,
Chills the pale morn, and bids his driving sleets
Deform the day delightless ; so that scarce
The bittern knows his time with bill engulfed
To shake the sounding marsh ; or from the shore
The plovers when to scatter o'er the heath,
And sing their wild notes to the listening waste.

JAMES THOMSON.
The Seasons.

A MARCH SNOW.

LET the old snow be covered with the new :
The trampled snow, so soiled, so stained and sod-
den ;
Let it be covered wholly from our view
By pure white flakes, all trackless and untrodden.
When Winter dies, low at the new Spring's feet,
Let him be mantled in a clean, white sheet.

Let the old life be covered by the new :
The old past so full of sad mistakes ;
Let it be wholly hidden from the view
By deeds as white and silent as snowflakes.
Ere the earth-life melts in the eternal spring
Let the white mantle of repentance fling
Soft drapery about it, fold on fold,
Even as the new snow covers up the old.

MRS. ELLA [WHEELER] WILCOX.

THE RETURN TO ENGLAND IN MARCH.

Now upon English soil I soon shall stand,
Homeward from climes that fancy deems more
fair;
And well I know that there will greet me there
No soft foam fawning upon smiling strand,
No scent of orange-groves, no zephyrs bland,
But Amazonian March, with breast half bare
And sleety arrows whistling through the air,
Will be my welcome from that burly land.
Yet he who boasts his birthplace yonder lies,
Owns in his heart a mood akin to scorn
For sensuous slopes that bask 'neath Southern skies,
Teeming with wine and prodigal of corn,
And, gazing through the mist with misty eyes,
Blesses the bare bleak land where he was born.

ALFRED AUSTIN.

MARCH.

WELCOME! Northwind from the Norland!
Strike upon our foremost foreland,
Sweep away, along the moorland,
Do thy gusty kind!

Thou and we were born together
In the black Norwegian weather;
Birds we be of one brave feather,
Welcome, bully wind!

Go ! with train of spray and sea-bird,
Fling the milky waves to leeward,
Drive the ragged rain-clouds seaward,
Chase the scudding ships.

To the southwind take our greeting,
Bid him send the Spring, his sweeting,
Say what stout hearts wait her meeting,
What bright eyes and lips.

EDWIN ARNOLD.

MARCH—PROMISE.

READY is time beneath her brooding wing,
To break, with jubilant life, the brown earth's
sheath ;

And fondly do we watch the expectant heath
For bloom and song the days are ripe to bring.
Impatient heralds vaunt the birth of spring,

While yet, alack ! the winter's blatant breath
Defieth trust, and coldly shadoweth
With drifts of gray each hope that dares to sing.
Yet still we know — as deepest shades foretell

The coming of the morn ; and lovely sheen
Of living sunshine lies asleep between
A frost-bound crust and joys that upward well —
Know, there is triumph for the yielding shell,
In ecstasies of song and matchless green !

MRS. MARY [BARKER] DODGE.

ARRESTED SPRING.

THE Spring has been here ; thus much, ye can tell ;
 Behold these half-unfolded leaves that lie
 Upon the path, beneath an ashen sky.
 Within these boughs, transfixed as by a spell,
 Songless the song-birds sit ; there is a smell
 Of Spring about, but that sweet smell shall die,
 As streams the west wind freed sink stagnantly,
 Because, last night, a blight on all things fell.
 What will ye hope, then in this desolate place ?
 Will ye entreat the Winter to make good
 His promise ; and with cold and lustrous grace,
 Change to a chrysolite the tender bud ?
 Not so, all energy that change could bring
 Lies mute ; arrested, with the arrested Spring.

PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.

PROPHETIC SPRING.

TO-DAY 'tis Spring ; the hawthorn tree
 Is green with buds ; to-day maybe
 She whom I think of thinks of me,
 And finds the thought enough ;
 And when those buds are grown to leaves,
 The thought wherein she scarce believes
 Will grow perhaps to love.

.

ARTHUR W. E. O'SHAUGHNESSY.

THE FIRST FOUND FLOWER.

To thee! though not the first of Spring's young race,
 The earliest wild flower, greeting yet mine eye,
 Even ere the crocus bursts in golden dye,
 Or primrose pale unveils its modest face, —
 To thee, small celandine, I yield first place.

For thou dost greet me, earliest of the band,
 That come as sweeteners, after storms and cares.

Remembrance of past pleasures! moments bland,
 Pledge of rich joys, the coming season bears!

Well might thy starry cup of golden bloom,
 Thy lowly virtues, one pure mind awake,
 Who sought, before the art-emblazoned dome,
 The flower-crowned mountain and the reedy lake :
 Thee! hallowed Wordsworth sang: I love thee
 for his sake.

THOMAS LISTER.

MARCH.

WITH rushing winds and gloomy skies
 The dark and stubborn Winter dies :
 Far-off, unseen, Spring faintly cries,
 Bidding her earliest child arise :

March!

.

BAYARD TAYLOR.

BY MARCH WIND LED.

THE wild, beleaguering March wind storms my door,
 And with him leads a phantom army vast, —
 Old hopes, old dreams, old Love too dear to last,
 And all that made life glad in days of yore
 Turned now to ghosts, and from their alien shore
 Come back for this one night, to bring the past,
 And vex me with its spell about me cast,
 Though it and I be parted evermore.
 Beleaguering host, I bid ye, now, avaunt !
 I will not listen though ye call for aye :
 As pitiless as blasts from this March sky
 I found ye once. Why should ye come to haunt
 This night that might be quiet? I defy
 Your evil power, — my soul ye shall *not* daunt.

MRS. LOUISE [CHANDLER] MOULTON.

MARCH.

MONTH whom nobody praises,
 Boisterous, blustering, blue, March,
 Here's a poor rhymester who raises
 His voice in honor of you, March ;
 What if no buttercups, daisies
 Nor mignonette ever yet grew, March,
 Under thy skies of leaden,
 Of deaden and desolate hue, March ?

Facing thy blasts is sport while it lasts
To those who're brave and true, March.
Volumes of verse have been written
On May — presumably arch —
But never a poet was smitten
By thine Amazon beauties, O March !
And yet, though thy face is frost-bitten,
And you sometimes have taken the starch
Entirely out of me, March,
I never will give you the mitten,
For spite of your name and your leonine fame
You are better than any mere kitten !
Not weavers of verses Byronic,
Who scoff at the grandeur of toil,
Can take thy sharp air as a tonic,
Their hope is in codliver oil ;
Not girls, whose faces are mealy,
Whose waists are wasted in stays,
Find aught in thy presence to praise ;
But the maidens who follow out freely
Great Nature's infallible ways :
Ah, them thy chilling breath braces,
And a walk on thy blustering days
Adds freshness to all their fair graces,
Brings rich color into their faces,
Brightens their eyes and sets their blood flowing
Like wine through their veins while high winds are
blowing.
Month whom nobody praises,
This song is written for you, March.

Enough of sunshine and daisies :

You nourish the strong and the true, March.

Let the weak singers then sigh on,

Their sonnets on May are a sham, March ;

What is the roar of a lion,

If it ends in the bleat of a lamb, March ?

MARC COOK.

A MARCH VIOLET.

BLACK boughs against a pale, clear sky,
Slight mists of cloud-wreaths floating by ;
Soft sunlight, gray-blue smoky air,
Wet thawing snows on hillsides bare ;
Loud streams, moist sodden earth ; below
Quick seedlings stir, rich juices flow
Through frozen veins of rigid wood,
And the whole forest bursts in bud.
No longer stark the branches spread
An iron network overhead,
Albeit naked still of green ;
Through this soft, lustrous vapor seen,
On budding boughs a warm flush glows,
With tints of purple and pale rose.
Breathing of spring, the delicate air
Lifts playfully the loosened hair
To kiss the cool brow. Let us rest
In this bright, sheltered nook, now blest

With broad noon sunshine over all,
Though here June's leafiest shadows fall.
Young grass sprouts here. Look up! the sky
Is veiled by woven greenery,
Fresh little folded leaves, — the first,
And goldener than green, they burst
Their thick full buds and take the breeze.
Here, when November stripped the trees,
I came to wrestle with a grief:
Solace I sought not, nor relief.
I shed no tears, I craved no grace,
I fain would see Grief face to face,
Fathom her awful eyes at length,
Measure my strength against her strength.
I wondered why the Preacher saith,
"Like as the grass that withereth."
The late, close blades still waved around:
I clutched a handful from the ground.
"He mocks us cruelly," I said:
"The frail herb lives, and she is dead."
I lay dumb, sightless, deaf as she;
The long slow hours passed over me.
I saw Grief face to face; I know
The very form and traits of Woe.
I drained the galled dregs of the draught
She offered me: I could have laughed
In irony of sheer despair,
Although I could not weep. The air
'Thickened with twilight shadows dim:
I rose and left: I knew each limb

Of these great trees, each gnarled, rough root
Piercing the clay, each cone of fruit
They bear in autumn.

What blooms here,
Filling the honeyed atmosphere
With faint, delicious fragrances,
Freighted with blessed memories?
The earliest March violet,
Dear as the image of Regret,
And beautiful as Hope. Again
Past visions thrill and haunt my brain.
Through tears I see the nodding head,
The purple and the green dispread.
Here, where I nursed despair that morn,
The promise of fresh joy is born,
Arrayed in sober colors still,
But piercing the gray mould to fill
With vague sweet influence the air,
To lift the heart's dead weight of care,
Longings and golden dreams to bring
With joyous phantasies of spring.

EMMA LAZARUS.

MARCH.

THE brown buds thicken on the trees,
Unbound, the free streams sing,
As March leads forth across the leas
The wild and windy spring.

Where in the fields the melted snow
Leaves hollows warm and wet,
Ere many days will sweetly blow
The first blue violet.

Dear flower-germs, which so long have lain
Within your wintry tomb,
Listening for April's vital rain
To call you into bloom,

O push the damp, dead leaves apart,
And spread your blossoms o'er
The little grave by which my heart
Sits weeping evermore !

MRS. ELIZABETH ANN CHASE [AKERS] [ALLEN].

THE THAW-SPIRIT.

I HAVE freed the stream from its icy chain,
And it goes rejoicing on to the main,
Like a traveller singing along the plain.

I have set the captive cataract free,
It lifts on the hills a cry of glee,
And is marching away to the distant sea.

I have broken the sleep of the frozen lake :
I have warmed its veins : it is broad awake,
Rejoicing death's slumbers away to shake.

I have freed the sea from its iron thrall :
I have loosened the icicles from the wall :
Like a beam of light from the eaves they fall.

See how the rescued waters run !
Leaping and dancing in the sun,
They escape, — their freedom is once more won.

I have broken the grottos' crystal pile ;
Lurid column, and radiant aisle,
And have poured in their depths the sunbeam's
smile.

The silent fount in the snowy cave,
Its sluice unsealed, now spouts its wave,
And leaps with a shout from its vaulted grave.

ISAAC MCLELLAN.

SPRING SONG.

DAYS of old,
Ye are not dead, though gone from me ;
Ye are not cold,
But like the summer birds fled o'er some sea.
The sun brings back the swallows fast
O'er the sea :
When he cometh at the last,
The days of old come back to me.

GEORGE MACDONALD.

THE LITTLE BROWN SEED.

“I’m of no use,” said a little brown seed ;
 “Where shall I go and hide ?
I’m little and brown, with nobody’s love,
 And ugly beside.”

So she rolled, and she rolled very quickly away,
 And tumbled on the ground ;
The rain came in torrents, and fell upon her
 And all things around.

And she felt herself sinking in darkness beneath,
 Poor little faithless seed !
Where never an eye could see her sad fate,
 Oh, she was hidden indeed !

The little brown seed lay still in the earth,
 To herself still sighing,
Till at last with an effort she roused up, and cried,
 “ I’ll begin by *trying*.

“ I’ll try and stop fretting, for ’tis of no use,
 And if I’ve nobody’s love,
I’ll look up in hope, for there’s one who will see,
 The dear God above.”

Oh, would you believe it ! straightway the dark ground
 Began to tremble and shake,
And make way for the little seed, hopeful now,
 Her upward way to take !

Up, up she went, till at last she saw
 The lovely, bright blue sky;
Oh, the beautiful spirit had found release,
 And the summer time was nigh!

The brightness and beauty that grew upon her,
 I cannot begin to speak;
Crowned with flowers she stood, beloved by all,
 So lovely, — yet so meek.

MRS. HARRIET MULFORD [STONE] LOTHROP.

THE AWAKENING.

A SPIRIT from the south through drifted glens
 And o'er the naked woods and wilds has flown:
Slipped from their leashes in the mountain dens,
 With deep and hollow voice the streams rush down,
Searching the level fields and sunken fens,
 And round soft, sodden banks and hillocks bare
Whirling in turbid circles everywhere.

The spongy soil sinks weltering to the foot,
 And still thin, dusky streaks of crusted snow
In cold shades linger on the hemlock's root;
 But all the open lawns and meadows glow
With faint warm flame of many a tender shoot;
 The hazel stems are bright with burnished green,
And russet-hooded buds spring up between.

The plains are full of mingled mist and light ;
Cloud-shadows cross the hills with sudden showers ;
The dawn in frosty calm breaks cold and white,
Ripening to golden bloom at noonday hours ;
Shrill winds and winter flurries blurr the night.
And in the glimpses of the rifted skies
The young moon's slender crescent gleams and
dies.

CHARLES LOTIN HILDRETH.

MARCH.

THE stripling doomed by fortune to forego
Hope of fair increase 'neath his native sky,
To a clime beyond the sea alone doth hie,
There in the wilderness doth delve and sow,
Hew down and build. But no self-centred eye
Sparkles like his to mark that roof-tree grow.
He sees afar one waiting for his cry —
“Hasten, beloved! that the hearth may glow!”
Thus doth rough March sweet April pioneer:
Expelled from either heaven his wind-wings speed
Across the seas to our remotest sphere.
For her he breaks the glebe, enroots the seed,
And builds the green tree while he fells the sere;
Her human smiles and tears his richest meed.

HENRY GAY HEWLETT.

An English Year.

PRIMROSES.

THE rancor of the east wind quelled, a thrush
Joyfully talking on through glittering rain ;
O see the yellow tufts along the lane,
Crowding the budded copse round every bush,
Starring the dingle by its brooklets' gush,
Dotting the elm-path's border, who not fain
To drink their tender sweetness, cool and fresh,
The very breath of spring returned again ?
The child's flower, in the childhood of the year :
Our slopes and woods but yesterday were drear,
Now all the country breaks into a smile
Of primroses, and youth is full of cheer ;
This fragrant vernal breeze in some, the while
Waking old thoughts unutterably dear.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

BURIED TO-DAY.

BURIED to-day,
When the soft green buds are bursting out,
And up on the south wind comes a shout
Of village boys and girls at play
In the mild spring evening gray.

Taken away
Sturdy of heart and stout of limb,
From eyes that drew half their light from him,

And put low, low underneath the clay,
In his spring, — on this spring day.

Passes away

 All the pride of boy-life begun,
 All the hope of life yet to run ;
Who dares to question when One saith "Nay."
Murmur not, — only pray.

Enters to-day

 Another body in churchyard sod,
 Another soul on the life in God.
His Christ was buried, — yet lives alway :
Trust Him, and go your way.

MRS. DINAH MARIA [MULOCK] CRAIK.

'TIS THE WHITE ANEMONE.

'Tis the white anemone, fashioned so
Like to the stars of the winter snow,
First thinks, " If I come too soon no doubt
I shall seem but the snow that stayed too long,
So 'tis I that will be Spring's unguessed scout."
And wide she wanders the woods among.
Then, from out of the mossiest hiding-places,
Smile meek moonlight-colored faces
Of pale primroses puritan,
In maiden sisterhood demure ;
Each virgin floweret faint and wan
With the bliss of her own sweet breath so pure.

And the borage, blue-eyed, with a thrill of pride,
(For warm is her welcome on every side)
From Elfland coming to take her place,
 Gay garments of verdant velvet takes
All creased from the delicate travelling-case
 Which a warm breeze breaks. The daisy awakes
And opens her wondering eyes, yet red
 About the rims with a too long sleep ;
Whilst, bold from his ambush, with helm on head
 And lance in rest, doth the bulrush leap.

EDWARD ROBERT LYTTON BULWER-LYTTON.

The Thistle.

THE WIND-FLOWER.

WIND-FLOWER, wind-flower, why are you here ?
This is a boisterous time of the year
For blossoms as fragile and tender as you
To be out on the roadsides, in spring-raiment new !
The snowflakes yet flutter abroad in the air,
And the sleet and the tempest are weary to bear.
Have you not come here, pale darling, too soon ?
You would seem more at home with the blossoms of
 June.

“Why have I come here ?” the wind-flower said ;
“Why ?” and she gracefully nodded her head
As a breeze touched her petals ; “Perhaps to show
 you
That the strong may be sometimes the delicate, too.

I am fed and refreshed by these cold, rushing rains;
The first melting snowdrifts brought life to my
veins;
The storm rocked my cradle with lullabies wild:
I am here with the wind,—because I am his
child!"

LUCY LARCOM.

A MARCH MIDNIGHT.

BLACK night! Fierce war of clouds and shrieking
wind:

White stars with flame-blown cressets dimly seen,
Pale glimpses where a hurrying moon has been
And left a chaos of wild sights behind.

From the thick darkness struggling to be free,

The glimmering cliff-line of a rounded bay

And, at its base, monotonous and grey,

The sullen plunging of a breaking sea.

Hoarse voices striving to be heard: the hiss

Of shattered spray, and rush of streaming foam

On pillared crags: and, round the gannets' home,

Visions of grey wings o'er the black abyss.

Behind the cliffs, far inland, all asleep!

A wet wind blowing over acres bare:

No strife, but a low whisper everywhere,

Earth stirring dreamily in slumber deep.

Rustle of last year leaves in hedgerow lanes,
 Bird-twitterings of a sudden hushed, the start
 Of hare's feet in the bracken, where the hart
 Has made his couch, until the shadowy plains
 Receive the dawn-beams, and the violets wake,
 And floods and forests smile to see the morning
 break.

HORACE GEORGE GROSER.

THE PRIMROSE IN THE VALLEY BLOOMS.

THE primrose in the valley blooms,
 The snowdrop swings its silent bells,
 The willow droops its tangled plumes,
 The maple's tufted blossom swells ;

Long sweeps of tender grass ascend
 The hillside, toward the melting snows,
 And where the climbing patches end,
 Full-flowered, the low arbutus blows.

A duller sense than mine should feel
 The stir in nature's warming soul ;
 It makes the shouting bluebirds reel,
 And bursts the violet's twisted scroll.

.

GEORGE HENRY BOKER.

The Book of the Dead.

A DAY IN MARCH.

Look forth, beloved, from thy mansion high
 By soft airs fanned,
And see the summer from her bluest sky
 Surprise the land !

See how the bare hills bask in purple bliss
 Along the south :
On the brown death of winter falls a kiss
 From summer's mouth !

From pines that weave, among the ravished trees,
 Their phantom bowers,
A murmur comes, as sought the ghosts of bees
 The ghosts of flowers.

Though yet no blood may swell the willow rind,
 No grass-blade start,
A dream of blossoms fills the yearning wind,
 Of love, my heart.

Look forth, beloved, through the tender air,
 And let thine eyes
The violets be it finds not anywhere,
 And scentless dies.

Look, and thy trembling locks of plenteous gold
 The day shall see,
And search no more where first, on yonder wold,
 The cowslips be.

Look, and the wandering summer not forlorn,
 Shall turn aside,
Content to leave her million flowers unborn,
 Her songs untried.

Drowsy with life and not with sleep or death,
 I dream of thee :
Breathe forth thy being in one answering breath,
 And come to me !

Come forth, beloved ! Love's exultant sign
 Is in the sky :
And let me lay my panting heart to thine
 And die !

BAYARD TAYLOR.

IN EARLY SPRING.

TO-DAY my inmost soul was stirred :
 I saw the crocus from the ground
Burst, like a little flame, and heard
 The wandering bluebird's trumpet sound.

The heat of life is in the air,
 And re-created summer swings
Her first faint odors here and there,
 To lure the bee's adventurous wings.

GEORGE HENRY BOKER.
The Book of the Dead.

MARCH.

. . . STURDY March, with brows full sternly bent
And armèd strongly, rode upon a ram,
The same which over Hellespontus swam ;
Yet in his hand a spade he also hent,
And in a bag all sorts of seeds ysame,
Which on the earth he strowèd as he went,
And filled her womb with fruitful hope of nourish-
ment.

EDMUND SPENSER.
The Faerie Queene.

A SNOWDROP.

ONLY a tender little thing,
So velvet soft and white it is ;
But March himself is not so strong,
With all the great gales that are his.

In vain his whistling storms he calls,
In vain the cohorts of his power
Ride down the sky on mighty blasts,
He cannot crush the little flower.

Its white spear parts the sod, the snows
Than that white spear less snowy are,
The rains roll off its crest like spray,
It lifts again its spotless star.

Blow, blow, dark March ! To meet you here,
Thrust upward from the central gloom,
The stellar force of the old earth
Pulses to life in this slight bloom.

MRS. HARRIET ELIZABETH [PRESCOTT] SPOFFORD.
Fancies.

SONG IN MARCH.

Now are the winds about us in their glee,
Tossing the slender tree ;
Whirling the sands about his furious car,
March cometh from afar ;
Breaks the sealed magic of old winter's dreams,
And rends his glassy streams ;
Chafing with potent airs, he fiercely takes
Their fetters from the lakes,
And with a power by queenly Spring supplied,
Wakens the slumbering tide.

With a wild love he seeks young Summer's charms
And clasps her in his arms ;
Lifting his shield between, he drives away
Old Winter from his prey ;
The ancient tyrant whom he boldly braves,
Goes howling to his caves ;
And, to his northern realm compelled to fly,
Yields up the victory ;
Melted are all his bands, o'erthrown his towers,
And March comes bringing flowers.

WILLIAM GILMORE SIMMS.

*SPRING KNOCKS AT WINTER'S FROSTY
DOOR.*

(VILLANELLE.)

SPRING knocks at winter's frosty door :
In boughs by wild March breezes swayed
The bonnie bluebirds sing once more.

The brooks have burst their fetters hoar,
And greet with noisy glee the glade ;
Spring knocks at winter's frosty door.

The swallow soon will northward soar,
The rush uplift its gleaming blade,
The bonnie bluebirds sing once more.

Soon sunny skies their gold will pour
O'er meads that breezy maples shade ;
Spring knocks at winter's frosty door.

Along the reedy river's shore
Fleet fawns will frolic unafraid,
The bonnie bluebirds sing once more.

And love, the love we lost of yore,
Will come to twine the myrtle braid :
Spring knocks at winter's frosty door,
The bonnie bluebirds sing once more.

CLINTON SCOLLARD.

THE FIRST CROCUS.

Do you know where the crocus blows?
Under the snows;
Wide-eyed and winsome and daintily fair
As waxen exotic close-tended and rare;
Every child knows
Where the first crocus blows.

Do you know why the crocus grows
Under the snows?
To tell that the winter is over and gone,
And soon bird and blossom will gladden the lawn,
And the hedgerows
Where the first crocus blows.

Do you know when the crocus grows
Under the snows?
When little ones sleep in their warm downy beds,
With mother-hands smoothing their dear curly heads;
While the storm goes
Where the first crocus blows.

Do you know while the crocus grows
Under the snows,
That One smileth softly and says, "I will send
This promise that all stormy times have an end."
So our Lord knows
Where the first crocus blows.

MRS. KATHARINE MARGARET [BROWNLEE] SHERWOOD.

IN MARCH.

SPRING, pass into the air !

Let the months of misery wane.

Shall I meet with my friend anywhere ?

Will he turn my sorrow to gain ?

Shall I find him in croft or garden,

Where the buds 'neath the north winds harden ?

Will he bid me be merry again ?

Love, pass into my soul !

Let the frost of grief be as rain ;

Make the sore stricken places whole ;

And lay cool hands on my pain.

In the wood, on the hill, by the river,

I then may laugh and deliver

The mirth that is mine again.

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

WINTER'S WRATH BEGINS TO QUELL.

. . . WINTER's wrath begins to quell,

And pleasant spring appeareth,

The grass now 'gins to be refresht,

The swallow peeps out of her nest

And cloudy welkin cleareth.

EDMUND SPENSER.

The Shepheards Calendar.

THE COMING OF SPRING.

WE wake one morning, and the frozen hush
That broods on field and forest winter-long,
Is broken by a brief and tremulous song
Poured from yon snow-girt pine-wood. 'Tis a
thrush!

Again, yet once again, those joy-notes gush
O'er the white wilderness; whereby a throng
Of summer hopes are loosened, and the strong
Night melts in earliest spring's auroral blush.
Soon streams will glide and murmur; here and there
Soft downy fledglings on the dry grey sod
Peep into light, dove-plumed anemones;
And meadow grass grow green, and everywhere
The sward be starred with scented crocuses,
And in mild air earth feel her present god.

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

MARCH.

THE March wind whistles through the sombre pines,
Whose sable crests show on the mountain ridge,
Like band of spectres gaunt, and grey and grim,
Against the cold blue sky: cold, clear, and blue
Without one fleecy cloud.

From furrows brown
The green blades shoot, that shall hereafter glow,
'Neath August sun-rays, into molten gold,

And fill our garner with the beauteous store
That crowns man's labor, and rewards his toil.
March, with his stern, grand brow, frowning, yet kind,
Front of a Titan; of imperious will,
King March rides blustering o'er dale and mead,
And with his chastening rule, prepares the way
For green-robed April, with her showers soft,
The pure warm sunshine, and her opening buds
Of yellow cowslip bells.

And jocund May,
Crowned with white blossoms, scatters in her track
Hawthorns all odorous, pink apple-blooms,
And all the gorgeous beauty of her dower,
That glads our English homes. So in our life,
Our truest joys must be from trial reaped,
And as March winds foreshadow April sun,
Our dross through furnace passing, comes out, — gold.

All The Year Round, March 4, 1871.

EARLY SPRING.

ONCE more the Heavenly Power
Makes all things new,
And domes the red-plowed hills
With loving blue;
The blackbirds have their wills
The throistles too.

Opens a door in Heaven;
From skies of glass

A Jacob's ladder falls
On greening grass,
And o'er the mountain walls
Young angels pass.

Before them fleets the shower,
And burst the buds,
And shine the level lands,
And flash the floods ;
The stars are from their hands
Flung through the woods,

The woods with living airs
How softly fanned,
Light airs from where the deep,
All down the sand,
Is breathing in his sleep,
Heard by the land.

O follow, leaping blood,
The season's lure !
O heart, look down and up
Serene, secure,
Warm as the crocus cup,
Like snowdrops pure !

Past, Future glimpse and fade
Through some slight spell,
A gleam from yonder vale,
Some far blue fell,

And sympathies, how frail,
In sound and smell !

Till at thy chuckled note,
Thou twinkling bird,
The fairy fancies range,
And, lightly stirred,
Ring little bells of change
From word to word.

For now the Heavenly Power
Makes all things new,
And thaws the cold and fills
The flower with dew ;
The blackbirds have their wills,
The poets too.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

MARCH.

THE desert winds of Araby
With hotter glow the brown sands parch ;
But not the storm of the Hellespont
Drives fiercer than the winds of March.

How still the silence of its death !
How hushed the earth when it has passed !
Fiercest of all the giant winds
Is thy unresting blast.

GEORGE WALTER THORNBURY.

SPRING.

WHITE as peeled willow-wands a-bleach in May
Are all her vestments, and her face is frail
As wavering wind-flowers or the scented spray
Of wild hedge-roses : on her head the pail
Foams with fresh milk ; and tufts of galingale
With cowslips mingled and the pensive hue
Of bluebells, 'neath her footing shed their dew.

Singing she wends ; nor thought nor shade of care
Dwells on her forehead ; for the year is young :
Black winter dies ; and in the tranquil air
The promise of spring flowers, and carols sung
By nightingales, and the glad cuckoo's tongue,
Proclaim new life, and lengthening days, and nights
Shortened to serve for sleepless Love's delights.

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

THE FIRST MILD DAY OF MARCH.

It is the first mild day of March,
Each minute sweeter than before ;
The redbreast sings from the tall larch
That stands beside our door.

There is a blessing in the air,
Which seems a sense of joy to yield
To the bare trees, and mountains bare,
And grass in the green field.

.
 No joyless forms shall regulate
 Our living calendar :
 We from to-day, my friend, will date
 The opening of the year.

Love, now a universal birth,
 From heart to heart is stealing,
 From earth to man, from man to earth :
 It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more
 Than fifty years of reason :
 Our minds shall drink at every pore
 The spirit of the season.

Some silent laws our hearts may make,
 Which they shall long obey ;
 We for the year to come may take
 Our temper from to-day.

.
 WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

DAFFODILS.

A SMILE of last year's sun strayed down the hills,
 And lost its way within yon windy wood ;
 Lost through the months of snow, but not for
 good ;
 March found it in a clump of daffodils.

WILLIAM WILSEY MARTIN.

THE SNOWDROP DIES.

(RONDEAU.)

THE snowdrop dies, yet the woods ring
 With happy voices of the spring,
 As if they would rebuke the sighs
 Which in the pensive heart arise,
 To see such grace take wing.

This is a time to dance and sing,
 And not round mournful fancies cling,
 Or murmur forth, with downcast eyes,
 The snowdrop dies !

Full many a flower can Nature bring,
 And richer hues about her fling :
 Look up and see the sunlit skies ;
 Beauty remains, though beauty flies :
 By fiat of fair Nature's king
 The snowdrop dies.
 RICHARD WILTON.

THE STAR OF MARCH.

. . . In clear March across the rough blue sea
 The spherèd sapphire of Alcyone
 Makes bright the blown brows of the wind-foot year.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.
Tristram and Iseult.

A MASQUE OF MARCH.

BETWEEN the darkening of the day and dawn
When earth from winter's bondage had withdrawn,
 What time men put reality away,
 And own the soothing sway
Of Sleep, the leaden-eyed,
And take calm-browed Forgetfulness for bride,
 There came a Thought that spoke in this strange
 wise,
 "Rise up, O dreamer, rise !
Go forth into the dusky ways of night,
And there, for thy delight,
 Such things shall greet thine eyes
As those inspired first wandering harpers knew
Betwixt the fall of dew
 And morn's effulgence in the eastern skies !"

Then I uprose,
And, as a wrestler throws
The garb that weighs his active limbs aside,
 So did I cast away dull lethargy,
 And strode forth glad and free
 Into the night's serene immensity,
Like one in brain renewed and vivified.
The mad March winds were whist,
And into slumber had sweet silence kissed
 The empurpled void, star-gemmed,
 And all the barren earth, horizon-hemmed.
I came erelong to where a sombre wood
In voiceless quiet stood,

And through its chilly aisles as oft before
When white-stoled May made sweet the hurrying
hours

With incense born of flowers,
I sought a tiny runnel's mossy shore.
This was my Helicon and Castaly,
And ever held for me
The ambrosial nectar of the bards of yore.
But as I onward fared I seemed to hear
Strange airy voices, sibilant yet clear :

I thought each maple spoke,
And every oak,
Low-drooping, whispered softly in my ear
Some liquid inarticulate sweet sound ;
While from the ground,
Thick-carpeted with shriveled wraiths of leaves
Woody by light zephyrs on long vanished eves,
There quivered little lisplings of pure tone,
Fine as a wind-harp's moan,
Or fairy flutings from some elfin zone.

Then died these sounds away ;
The unhaloed moon,
Uprising clear as on a night in June,
Lit all the leafless labyrinth, dim and gray,
With floods of effluent light that gleamed and
glanced
Where through the glade the gleesome waters
danced.
The spectral fingers of the forest threw

Athwart an open space sharp lines of shade ;
I crossed the quaint mosaics that they made,
And, by a crumbling hemlock, whence there flew
A startled night-bird with a ghostly "*whoo*,"
Paused, where the waters of the swollen spring,
With gentle murmuring,
Swept swiftly on the slumbering woodland through.
There wonderingly I heard
A softly uttered word,
Sweet-syllabled, yet alien to my ear.
I raised my eyes, and lo !
Within the spherèd night-queen's lustrous glow,
Upon the ice-freed rillet's farther bank,
In many a radiant rank,
I saw weird elves of visage gaunt and sere,
With limbs a-bow like winter-warpèd boughs ;
Who, while they held fantastical carouse,
Waved to and fro upon their elfin round
Dried birchen sprays that made a grewsome sound.

But, as they mourned the withering winter's death,
There came a breeze before whose balmy breath
They faded like thin mist-wreaths from my view.
And then a merry crew,
Clad in the shimmering green of grass in May,
Sprang from the thicket gray
And forward thridded through a sprightly dance,
The while deft hands, unseen,
Tinkled the gnomie bells and tambourine.
And as I watched them pause, retreat, advance,

I could discern, ere long,
That each of all the featly-stepping throng
Upheld a full-blown flower,
And there were none who had the same for dower.
Those first in line

 The saintly snowdrop and the crocus bore,
 The rathe hepatica, the daffodil,
 And other fragile blooms of vale and hill
That in the changing days of April shine ; —
 The tiny kingcup, that upon the floor
Of emerald meads unurns its ample gold,
 The hyacinth with royal purple bells,
 The slender valley-lily whose frail cells
A nectary of sweet enchantment hold.

And then there came

 Sprites who uplifted high
 The haughtier blossoms of resplendent dye ;
A kingly tulip, with its mouth of flame,
A stately lily and a queenly rose,
A poppy, crimson as the sun that glows
 At day's decline within the western sky.
And some among the dancing fairy folk
 Waved fronds of fern and rushes like keen blades,
 And sinuous vines that twine in haunted glades
Around the lichened boles of beech and oak.
And some for pennons flaunted grassy spears,
 And some slim shoots of ripened amber grain,
 And plumèd corn, that garrisons the plain
Until the autumn reddens all its ears.

Fast whirled the blithe array
Until a jagged cloud-rack, glooming gray,
Darkened the moon's bright face ;
Silence and shadow filled the wildwood place ;
And when again the round orb gleamed o'erhead,
The airy elves had fled.

The merry masque was o'er ;
And, as I left the streamlet's dreamy shore,
The wandering wind seemed singing this refrain,
“ *To-night the Spring begins her gracious reign !*”

CLINTON SCOLLARD.

MARCH.

No winter twilight chills us now, but rather
The night is waning, and the day is near ;
Far to the northern distance, and yet farther
Fades the unheeded splendor of the year.
No flower, in truth, may cheer the eager sight,
No lonely bird is calling for its mate ;
We have the sense of earth's forthcoming light,
Spring broods above the hills, and we can wait.

The meadow does not heed the warmth returning,
The starry coltsfoot still withholds her buds,
The wishful eye, far-sighted and discerning,
Can choose no spot of green amid the woods ;
There is no winsome odor in the winds,
But with a pulse of living strength they blow,

Though in some hollow still the traveller finds
Half-sheltered from the sun, the lingering snow.

The Spring reveals herself in secret only,
Through hidden signs we guess her mystic power,
The fields are bare, the woodlands wild and lonely,
But lo! beneath the earth she hides the flower.
The willows quicken at the river's brim,
The eager alder breaks her tawny buds,
The upland hills are wrapt in hazes dim,
And sweet, impulsive life has stirred the woods.

DORA READ GOODALE.

THE STARLINGS.

EARLY in springtime, on raw and windy mornings,
Beneath the freezing house-eaves I heard the star-
lings sing:
"Ah, dreary March month, is this then a time for
building wearily?
Sad, sad, to think that the year is but begun."

Late in the autumn, on still and cloudless even-
ings,
Among the golden reed-beds I heard the star-
lings sing:
"Ah, that sweet March month, when we and our
mates were courting merrily;
Sad, sad, to think that the year is all but done."

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

A MARCH NIGHT.

WHITE moonbeams, trembling through the night
Upon the wind-stirred lawn, and swayed
By sudden gusts in tossing light
On bare March boughs along the glade,

Shine clear upon the surge-lashed head,
Shine clear upon the rock-set bay :
The sea has had enough of dead,
And the brave ships plunge on their way.

Wild river, flying from the wind
On, past the quiet village homes
With their long furrowed fields behind,
To leap into the mad sea-foams,

Wail echoing to the cruel sea,
Wail for us that it spare its prey :
Mothers are weeping on bent knee,
And the frail ships toss on their way.

Fierce whirlwinds, warring on our plain
With the strong trees that heave and crash,
Hurling away the pelts of rain,
Shrill shrieking through the rattling sash,

Faint, weary from thy rage, and die :
Far off the billows writhe in spray,
We waken at thy voice and sigh,
And the dear ships plunge on their way.

MRS. AUGUSTA [DAVIES] WEBSTER.

NORTH WINDS.

THE March winds rave between the hills,
Cold run the steel-blue shining rills,
Through the wide void a wailing shrills.

The sun is high at equinox,
The cold blast the pale sunshine mocks,
Helpless the giddy rookery rocks.

Ice gathers on the scarce-loosed flood,
The sap stands still within the bud,
Chill slackens soon the heart's young blood.

The far heights start out one by one,
Down the hillsides cloud-shadows run
Across the cold glare of the sun.

The long marsh in the windy vale
With sedges lightens and turns pale,
Pointed one way before the gale.

There were some flowers short time ago :
When the wind falls will come the snow ;
O foolish flowers, why did ye blow ?

All wan and dazzling overhead
The Arctic flood is tost and spread :
Methinks the Spring itself is dead.

MRS. HARRIET ELEANOR [HAMILTON] KING.

THE EARLY PRIMROSE.

MILD offspring of a dark and sullen sire !
Whose modest form, so delicately fine,
 Was nursed in whirling storms
 And cradled in the winds.

Thee, when young Spring first questioned Winter's
 sway
And dared the sturdy blusterer to the fight,
 Thee on this bank he threw
 To mark his victory.

.
HENRY KIRKE WHITE.

THE FLOWERS OF EARLY SPRING.

. O PROSERPINA,
For the flowers now, that, frightened thou let'st fall
From Dis's wagon ! daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty ; violets, dim,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,
Or Cytherea's breath ; pale primroses,
That die unmarried, ere they can behold
Bright Phœbus in his strength.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.
Winter's Tale.

THE CROCUS AND THE SOLDANELLA.

WHEREVER on the untrodden Alps
The snows begin to fade,
And frozen streams to leap again
Beneath the pine-tree shade ;
While still the grass is brown and dead
With its long winter sleep,
And leafless shrubs their withered arms
Stretch down the barren steep ;
Then here and there two little flowers,
Like lights of earliest morn,
Or rays of hope in sorrow seen,
Shine on the slopes forlorn.
They break the snow with gentle force
And struggle toward the sun :
The chilly wreaths around them melt,
The streams beneath them run.
The dull old earth feels young again,
So fresh and bright they peer,
Pale pearly cups and lilac bells,
Crying " The Spring is here."
But when the snows have died and flown
Like spirits to the sky,
In shape of fleecy summer clouds
That on the mountains lie ;
When on the cool green fields the grass
Grows deeper day by day ;
And all the troops of laughing flowers
Make rock and meadow gay ;

Then you may look in vain to find
These first frail buds of spring :
The month that quickens all to life
Hath watched their withering.
They broke the frozen winter snow,
And spake the first good morrow ;
They bade us be of better cheer
When we were dulled with sorrow.
Now they must die and droop away :
Their very graves ignore them ;
Fresh leaves and gaudy blossoms wave
Above the slopes that bore them.
Only where here and there the snows
Of avalanches linger,
And Winter on a gloomy dell
Lays his cold lifeless finger ;
There still secluded from the wealth
Of happier fields they blow,
Blooming and fading hour by hour
Near the retreating snow.
They bloom and fade, and do not shrink
From their appointed duty ;
To show the path that June must tread
But not to share her beauty ;
To live their short lives on the brink
Of death, and then to perish,
Between the chill snow and the sun
That burns but does not cherish.
Die, little flowers, but not unwept
Nor yet unhonored die :

Like you dawn's herald star doth fade
 From the dim morning sky ;
 Like you the great and good and wise,
 The first of those who woke
 From sleeps of ignorance and through
 The snows of ages broke,
 Sank, having done their work, nor saw
 The summer they foretold :
 Glad flowers and grasses o'er them wave,
 Blue, crimson, green, and gold.

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

THE RED PLANET.

ERE science looked with an unwearied glance
 Into the very souls of distant stars,
 And pondered faithfully the face of Mars,
 We placed within the planet's hand a lance,
 A shield upon his breast, — and in our trance
 Of ignorance, we made his rust-hued bars
 A pretext to devote to him the scars
 And mantling honors of blood-red mischance
 And loyalty of battle. Then, akin
 To wildest winds we deemed his moods and
 brought
 The spring's first month to him for chrism, — and
 wrought
 Their names almost in one. Oh, had we seen
 As now we see that poor, half-frozen star,
 It still had symbolled March, but never War!

MRS. MARY [BARKER] DODGE.

BARREN SPRING.

ONCE more the changed year's turning wheel re-
turns :

And as a girl sails balanced in the wind,

And now before and now again behind

Stoops as it swoops, with cheek that laughs and
burns

So Spring comes merry towards me here, but earns

No answering smile from me, whose life is twined

With the dead boughs that winter still must bind,

And whom to-day the Spring no more concerns.

Behold, this crocus is a withering flame ;

This snowdrop, snow ; this apple blossom's part

To breed the fruit that breeds the serpent's art.

Nay, for these Spring-flowers, turn thy face from
them,

Nor stay till on the year's last lily-stem

The white cup shrivels round the golden heart.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

LONGER WAXED THE DAYS.

. LONGER waxed the days

And the nights warmer, till a tremor ran,

Preluding the revival of the year,

Along the leafless boughs. And, ere it passed,

Lo you ! like love, that changes life, all round,

Above, beneath, the Spring was everywhere ;

Troubling the sleep of Nature with mad hopes.
All things of joy and beauty, long repressed,
Broke out in revel, riotously sure
Of May's delirious promise. From whose mirth,
Pelted with buds, the frowning Winter wrapped
His white robe round him, like a minister
Disgraced, that from the uprisen people runs,
And fled, barefooted; muttering, "Motley fools,
That fling a saucy triumph in the face
Of fleeting Power, sing! dance! pavilion all
The tipsy tops of yonder swaggering trees
With tasselled fringe! on every wanton puff
Of passing wind swing out your banners blithe!
Carpet with squandered broidery, green and gold,
The dull land decked for your audacious march!
Break ope earth's hidden treasures! twirl and toss
Your silly, twinkling timbrels that proclaim
A world's subversion! Fools, *I shall return.*"

EDWARD ROBERT LYTTON BULWER-LYTTON.
The Misanthrope.

SPRING UNDER CYPRESSES.

UNDER the cypresses, here in the stony
Woods of the mountain, the spring too is sunny:
Rare spring and early,
Birds singing sparely,
Pale sea-green hellebore smelling of honey.

Desolate, bright, in the blue Lenten weather
Cones of the cypresses sparkle together,
 Shining brightly
 As, loosely and lightly,
The winds lift the branches and stir them and
feather.

Where the sun pierces, the sharp boulders glitter
Desolate, bright ; and the white moths flitter
 Pallidly over
 The bells that cover
With faint-smelling green all the fragrant brown
bitter.

Down in the plain the sun ripens for hours ;
Look ! in the orchards a mist of pale flowers ;
 Past the rose hedges
 A-bloom to the edges,
A smoke of blue olives, a vision of towers !

Here only hellebore grows, only shade is ;
Surely the very spring here half afraid is ;
 Out of her bosom
 Drops not a blossom,
Mutely she passes through, — she and her ladies.

Mutely ? Ah, no ; for a pause, and thou hearest
One bird who sings alone, — one bird, the dearest.
 Nay, who shall name it,
 Call it or claim it ?
Such birds as sing at all sing here their clearest.

Ah, never dream that the brown meadow thrushes,
Finches, or happy larks sing in these hushes.

Only some poet
Of birds, flying to it,
Sings here alone, and is lost to the bushes.

AGNES MARY FRANCES ROBINSON.

MARCH.

MISTS inveil the earth and sky ;
Tempests shake their angry sleets,
Fierce with ominous lullaby,
O'er the dreary, dismal streets.

Desolate, forbidding days,
Born of winter's dying breath,
Deluge now the lowly ways,
From her melting ghosts of death.

Voices, phantoms from the haunts,
From the caverns and the keeps
Of dumb Nature's hollow wants,
Echo from her barren steeps.

Wailing winds, in mournful tone,
Unavailing, tell their pain,
As if searching for their own
O'er the fields of winter-slain.

Yet thou art the month of tears,
Broken-hearted, and we find,
Through the ever-forming years,
That thy sullen clouds are lined :

That beneath thy brusque disguise
Kindness lurks, and golden haze,
Breathing Nature's softest sighs,
Weaving there her violet Mays.

Ah ! thou heart of wild complaint,
Mute regrets, and hopeless pain,
Stay, ere utterly thou faint,
Life and love will come again !

STEPHEN HENRY THAYER.

KNOW YOU HOW SPRING ASCENDS.

Know you how Spring ascends the mountain valleys
In fragrant dances on the line of snows,
Enrobed in wind half-cool, half-warm, that dallies
With vineyards now, and now by snow peak blows?
When vernal hills are green with dainty guesses,
With hope, with promise of delicious pain,
And sun from udders of the glaciers presses
The foamy milk, life to the thirsty plain, —
Know you the zest that fills
Spring in the hills ?

CHARLES DE KAY.

Vision of Nimrod.

IN MARCH.

. . . THE swift river from the high ground swelled,
 And still tormented by the wind and rain,
 Burst from the ice and covered all the plain
 With breadth of turbid waters. . . .
 . . . Nor was it long
 Ere in the woods the birds began their song,
 For March was come and life to everything,
 Nor did the buds fear much the doubtful spring.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

The Life and Death of Jason.

IN MARCH I SING.

(PRELUDE TO AN EARLY BOOK OF VERSE.)

IN March the earliest bluebird came
 And caroled from the orchard tree
 His little tremulous songs to me,
 And called upon the summer's name,

And made old summers in my heart
 All sweet with flower and sun again ;
 So that I said, "O not in vain
 Shall be thy lay of little art,

"Though summer sun may never glow,
 Nor summer flower for thee may bloom ;
 Though winter turn in sudden gloom,
 And drowse the stirring spring with snow ;"

And learned to trust, if I should call
Upon the sacred name of Song,
Though chill through March I languish long,
And never feel the May at all,

Yet may I touch, in some who hear,
The hearts, wherein old songs asleep
Wait but the feeblest touch to leap
In music sweet as summer air !

I sing in March brief bluebird lays,
And hope a May, and do not know :
May be, the heaven is full of snow,
May be, there open summer days.

WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS.

SPRING IN CAROLINA.

SPRING, with that nameless pathos in the air
Which dwells with all things fair,
Spring, with her golden suns and silver rain,
Is with us once again.

Out in the lonely woods the jasmine burns
Its fragrant lamps, and turns
Into a royal court with green festoons
The banks of dark lagoons.

In the deep heart of every forest tree
The blood is all a-gee,

And there's a look about the leafless bowers
As if they dreamed of flowers.

Yet still on every side we trace the hand
Of Winter in the land,
Save where the maple reddens on the lawn,
Flushed by the season's dawn ;

Or where, like those strange semblances we find
That age to childhood bind,
The elm puts on, as if in Nature's scorn,
The brown of autumn corn.

As yet the turf is dark, although you know
That, not a span below,
A thousand germs are groping through the gloom,
And soon will burst their tomb.

.
In gardens you may note amid the dearth,
The crocus breaking earth ;
And near the snowdrop's tender white and green,
The violet in its screen.

But many gleams and shadows needs must pass
Along the budding grass,
And weeks go by, before the enamored South
Shall kiss the rose's mouth.

Still there's a sense of blossoms yet unborn
In the sweet airs of morn ;

One almost looks to see the very street
Grow purple at his feet.

At times a fragrant breeze comes floating by,
And brings, you know not why,
A feeling as when eager crowds await
Before a palace gate

Some wondrous pageant; and you scarce would
start,
If from a beech's heart,
A blue-eyed Dryad, stepping forth, should say,
"Behold me! I am May!"

.
HENRY TIMROD.

THE VERNAL DAWN.

THE air is full of hopes
And presages of bloom.
The supplicating hands
Which, through the winter's gloom,
The forest grim and gaunt,
Stretched, asking raiment, droop
Laden with promises.
All beauty seems to group
And strew earth's lap and brow
With wreaths of prophecy.

MRS. SARA LOUISA [VICKERS] OBERHOLTZER.

SPRING.

FROST-LOCKED all the winter,
Seeds and roots, and stones of fruits,
What shall make their sap ascend
That they may put forth shoots?
Tips of tender green,
Leaf, or blade, or sheath;
Telling of the hidden life
That breaks forth underneath,
Life nursed in its grave by death.

Blows the thaw-wind pleasantly,
Drips the soaking rain,
By fits looks down the waking sun :
Young grass springs on the plain ;
Young leaves clothe early hedgerow trees ;
Seeds and roots, and stones of fruits,
Swollen with sap put forth their shoots ;
Curled-headed ferns sprout in the lane ;
Birds sing and pair again.

There is no time like Spring,
When life's alive in everything,
Before new nestlings sing,
Before cleft swallows speed their journey back
Along the trackless track,
(God guides their wing,
He spreads their table that they nothing lack,)
Before the daisy grows a common flower,

Before the sun has power
To scorch the world up in his noontide hour.

There is no time like Spring,
Like Spring that passes by;
There is no life like Spring-life born to die,
Piercing the sod,
Clothing the uncouth clod,
Hatched in the nest,
Fledged on the windy bough,
Strong on the wing :
There is no time like Spring that passes by,
Now newly born, and now
Hastening to die.

CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI.

LENGTHENING DAYS.

*O PRINCE of Morning, hear our praise
For all the joy of lengthening days !
Now all about in yonder wood
The tender green things are in bud,
Each twinkling like an elfin's eye
From frozen clods and branches dry ;
Primrose and coltsfoot, one or two,
Are here again with blossoms new,
And dimly on the orchard floor
Fresh grass is glimmering as of yore ;*

Birds flutter to and fro in pairs,
The sunlight flickers unawares,
And, mid the drifting clouds, the blue
Sweet sky comes faintly struggling through.

Still shorter grows the baleful night
Whose shapeless dreams our souls affright,
And swifter on the world is borne
The glad enfranchisement of morn;
Grey twilight lingers in the trees
A little longer night by night,
And birds with bolder melodies
Lend unto us their own delight;
And something stolen from the gloom,
And something given unto the day,
Bids in our hearts a whisper come:
Lo, now the Spring is on her way,
And hope arises, for we know
Her smile shall melt the frost of woe.

GEORGE MILNER.

AN EARLY SPRING.

WHAT if I found a crocus yesterday,
And then a hyacinth in perfect bloom?
They only prove this southern March is May.
I gain an earlier spring, but throw away
Sweet days and nights which would have given me
A longer joy than hyacinth perfume,

And surer promises than here I see
Of better summer days than these can ever be.

Bloom, hyacinth and crocus, — not for me ;
Shine, genial sun, — not genial to my heart ;
Blow, winds of spring ; flow, waters fresh and free,
And be to others what you cannot be
To those who will not bear with your delay,
But snatch and crush the joy you else impart.
O, little joy is there in blooming May
For him who knows not March and many a doubtful
day !

ROBERT KELLEY WEEKS.

WITCHWORK.

UNDINE and all her troop
Are out to-night ; the tides are high ;
Like spray far thrown across the moon,
The clouds go sailing through the sky.
The showers sweep down and shroud the world,
On darkling rainbows skim afar ;
The brooks burst up beside the way,
And great winds strip some naked star :
Great winds, mad winds, winds of March,
That, streaming from the void and vast,
Make mortals feel the impotence
Of atoms borne before the blast.
But Ariel holds them in his leash ;

All the Wild Ladies follow him ;
The great Ghandarvas blow their tunes
From silver peaks and valleys dim ;
Witch and warlock, imps and elves,
The urchins of the misty dale,
And echoes mocking all the stir,
Ride down the long gust of the gale !
Hark ! do you catch the Banshee's cry ?
That is the hammering Trolls you hear !
Turn not too swiftly, lest you start
The Lurley singing in your ear !
Powers of earth and powers of air
Are all abroad ; the night is quick
With strange and subtile sorceries,
Bred of the storm, and swarming thick
As bees about a blooming branch,
Honey dripping, dew besprent,
Steeped in sunshine underneath
The blue of some great morning's tent.
Each enchantment of the sphere,
Blown from the sea and blown from shore,
Works its wild will and wizardry
While darkness wraps the gay uproar,
Till rosy dawn shall set the spell ;
When, lo ! the bare boughs of yestreen
Confess the magic of the March,
And wave such veils of callow green
As clad, in the old mystic tale,
The rods that Jannes and Jambres throw ;
To break in blossom as they fall
Before the feet of Pharaoh !

For the fierce tempest, with its shock
Of wind and sleet that midnight cloaks,
Like some old thaumaturge who makes
A mighty marvel, now evokes —
The violet on her dewy locks,
The sunlight on her lifted wing,
The clouds of incense floating by —
The Apparition of the Spring !

MRS. HARRIET ELIZABETH [PRESCOTT] SPOFFORD.

A DISAPPOINTMENT.

SPRING, of a sudden, came to life one day.
Ere this, the winter had been cold and chill.
That morning first the summer air did fill
The world, making bleak March seem almost May.
The daffodils were blooming golden gay ;
The birch trees budded purple on the hill ;
The rose that clambered up the window-sill,
Put forth a crimson shoot. All yesterday
The winds about the casement chilly blew,
But now the breeze that played about the door,
So caught the dead leaves that I thought there flew
Brown butterflies up from the grassy floor.
But someone said you came not. Ah, too true !
And I, I thought that winter reigned once more.

WILFRED SCAWEN BLUNT.

THE CROCUS.

WE see thy sweet face, when, within the valleys,
Loud roar the swollen rills,
While yet the storm wind ominously dallies
Around the snow-crowned hills.

E'en as a bright-winged fairy thou upspringest
From out the wizened earth,
And dreams of pleasure unalloyed thou bringest
With thine auspicious birth.

Thou markest the return of faun and satyr
That dance down ferny dells,
Whose nimble footsteps we hear faintly patter
Among the wild harebells.

Thou art as welcome as a maiden bearing
Some cool, delicious balm
To one who long through waste lands hath been
faring,
In search of sheltering palm.

Few are the hearts, be they or proud or lowly,
Beneath heaven's azure sea,
That are not touched with an emotion holy,
At sight, dear flower, of thee!

CLINTON SCOLLARD.

SPRING.

WHO was it that so lately said,
All pulses in thine heart were dead,

Old earth, that now in festal robes
Appearest, as a bride new wed?

O wrapt so late in winding-sheet,
Thy winding-sheet, oh! where is fled?

Lo! 'tis an emerald carpet now,
Where the young monarch, Spring, may tread.

He comes, — and, a defeated king,
Old Winter, to the hills is fled.

The warm wind broke his frosty spear,
And loosed the helmet from his head;

And he weak showers of arrowy sleet
From his strongholds has vainly sped.

All that was sleeping is awake,
And all is living that was dead.

Who listens now, can hear the streams
Leap tinkling down their pebbly bed;

Or see them, from their fetters free,
Like silver snakes the meadows thread.

The joy, the life, the hope of earth,
They slept awhile, they were not dead :

Oh thou who say'st the sere heart ne'er
With verdure can again be spread ;

Oh thou who mournest them that sleep,
Low lying in an earthy bed ;

Look out on this reviving world,
And be new hopes within thee bred.

RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH.

HOAR-FROST.

WHAT dream of beauty ever equaled this !

What bands from fairyland have sallied forth,
With snowy foliage from the abundant north,
With imagery from the realms of bliss !

What visions of my boyhood do I miss

That are not here restored ! All splendors pure,
All loveliness, all graces that allure ;

Shapes that amaze ; a paradise that is —

Yet was not — will not in few moments be :

Glory from nakedness, that playfully

Mimics with passing life each summer boon ;

Clothing the ground, replenishing the tree ;

Weaving arch, bower, and delicate festoon ;

Still as a dream, and like a dream to flee !

WILLIAM HOWITT.

MARCH.

MARCH with her thralls,	Will soon outwear
And wayward brawls,	The winter lair
The springtime calls ;	That holds them there ;

Calls o'er the lawn	Shrieks to the frost
For break of dawn,	Its reign is lost,
And summer fawn,	To count the cost,

And tells the trees	And make repair
In racking breeze,	For wind and tear
To wake from ease ;	By moistened air ;

Whispers the roots	Shouts from the hill
To send their shoots	To rippling rill
In green surtouts,	Its breast to fill,

Nor fear the blast	And roughly screams
That cannot last,	To maddening streams
But, marching fast,	Its fickle dreams.

.
MRS. SARA LOUISA [VICKERS] OBERHOLTZER.

WHEN THE CUCKOO COMES.

OH, why that falling tear ?
 Cheer up, my darling, cheer !
 Health will call again, my dear,
 When the cuckoo comes.

When windy March is gone,
With his heart as cold as stone,
In the bonny, merry moon
When the cuckoo comes.

The streams, like polished glass,
Tinkle music as they pass,
To each merry milking lass,
When the cuckoo comes.
O, then to seek the glade,
And to linger in the shade,
In the bonny, merry moon
When the cuckoo comes.

The Devon hedges blow
With purple, gold and snow,
And crowtoe-goblets glow,
When the cuckoo comes.
And all creation rings
With the glory-song it sings,
In the bonny, merry moon
When the cuckoo comes.

I will tell a tale to thee
Underneath the hawthorn tree,
Where you told your love to me,
When the cuckoo comes.
And, forgetting present pain,
We will dream the past again,
In the bonny, merry moon
When the cuckoo comes.

EDWARD CAPERN.

SEA-WEED.

WHEN descends on the Atlantic
The gigantic
Storm-wind of the equinox,
Landward in his wrath he scourges
The toiling surges,
Laden with sea-weed from the rocks :

From Bermuda's reefs ; from edges
Of sunken ledges,
In some far-off, bright Azore,
From Bahama, and the dashing,
Silver-flashing
Surges of San Salvador ;

From the tumbling surf, that buries
The Orkneyan skerries,
Answering the hoarse Hebrides,
And from wrecks of ships, and drifting
Spars, uplifting
On the desolate, rainy seas ;

Ever drifting, drifting, drifting
On the shifting
Currents of the restless main ;
Till in sheltered coves, and reaches
Of sandy beaches,
All have found repose again.

.
HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

EQUINOX.

"The night of time far surpasseth the day ; and who knows when was the equinox ?"

FIRST, winds of March must blow and rains must
beat,

Thick airs blend wood, and field, and distant hill,
Before the heavy sky hath wept its fill ;
And, like a creeping sloth, the chill must eat
Down close to Nature's core ; in dull repeat
The days move on with scant light until,
Far shining from his western window-sill,
Some evening sun full face to face we meet !
And then we say the line is crossed : the feud
Between Old Night and Day adjusted stands,
As in a balance swung by airy hands
Above the clouds. Our fancies are but crude,
And lightly gossip of infinitude :

None knows how wide the arch of Night expands !

EDITH MATILDA THOMAS.

CHARLTON THRUSHES.

HATH winter fled with those dull rooks yestreen,
Which from our knolls on sooty burdened wings
Flapped to some inland wood in lengthening
strings ?

This morn young zephyrs wake earth's shy pale
green,

And range each snowdrop-maiden round her queen,
The all-golden crocus. Darkling, sweetly sings
The thrush; 'neath cloudlets gray she blissful
flings

Her echoed notes, and rocking high is seen.
All hail, fair spring! Day broadens and soft light
Suffuses blackest elms with tender shades
Of amber purple; soon, too soon, in amber dight,
Eve gleams afar; then, slow withdrawing, fades;
But thrushes still, their wide gaunt boughs among,
Round Charlton's oriels pour full floods of song.

MORGAN GEORGE WATKINS.

MARCH WINDS.

O WINDS of March, that madly roar and rave
Like angry fiends, the stark sere forest through,
Blanching to icy fear the lucent dew
With which the south wind's tender kiss did lave,
But yester eve, the brown tufts o'er the grave,
"Where the pure violet and the pale anemone"
Have lain so long asleep, it seems to me
Spring cannot come too soon their breath to save.
Had ye not sport enough to toss the snow
In domes and towers, whose alabaster height
Created marble cities in a night,
And mocked the fleecy clouds with masks below?
Since these have vanished, why your spells prolong?
We pine for blossoms and the wood-bird's song.

WILLIAM CAREY RICHARDS.

MARCH.

THE keen north wind pipes loud ;
Swift scuds the flying cloud ;
Light lies the new fallen snow ;
The ice-clad eaves drip slow,
For glad spring has begun,
And to the ardent sun
The earth, long time so bleak,
Turns a frost-bitten cheek.
Through the clear sky of March,
Blue to the topmost arch,
Swept by New Year's gales,
The crow, harsh-clamoring, sails.
By the swift river's flood
The willow's golden blood
Mounts to the highest spray,
More vivid day by day ;
And fast the maples now
Crimson through every bough,
And from the alder's crown
Swing the long catkins brown.
Gone is the winter's pain
Though sorrow still remain,
Though eyes with tears be wet,
The voice of our regret
We hush, to hear the sweet
Far fall of summer's feet.
The Heavenly Father wise
Looks in the saddened eyes

Of our unworthiness,
Yet doth He cheer and bless.
Doubt and despair are déad ;
Hope dares to raise her head,
And whispers of delight
Fill the earth day and night.
The snowdrops by the door
Lift upward, sweet and pure,
Their delicate bells ; and soon,
In the calm blaze of noon,
By lowly window-sills
Will laugh the daffodils !

MRS. CELIA [LAIGHTON] THAXTER.

MARZO PAZZO.

MAD March, with the wind in his wings widespread,
Leaps from heaven, and the deep dawn's arch
Hails re-risen again from the dead
Mad March.

Soft small flames on rowan and larch
Break forth as laughter on lips that said
Nought till the pulse in them beat love's march.

But the heartbeat now in the lips rose-red
Speaks life to the world, and the winds that parch
Bring April forth as a bride to wed
Mad March.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

THE LOSS OF THE EURYDICE.

(MARCH 24, 1878.)

Tired with the toils that know no end,
On wintry seas long doomed to roam,
They smiled to think that March could lend
Such radiant winds to waft them home ;
Long perils overpast,
They stood for port at last,
Close by the fair familiar water-way,
And on their sunlit lee
All hearts were glad to see
The crags of Culver through the shining day ;
While every white-winged bird,
Whose joyous cry they heard,
Seemed wild to shout the welcome that it bore
Of love from friends on shore.

Ah, brief their joy, as days are brief
In March that loves not joy or sun ;
O bitter to the heart of grief
The port that never shall be won ;
Fair ship, with all sail set,
Didst thou perchance forget
The changing times and treacherous winds of
spring ?
And could those headlands gray
Rehearse no tale to-day,
Of wrecks they have seen, and many a grievous
thing ?

Thy towering cliff, Dunnose,
 Full many a secret knows :
 Cry out in warning voice ! too much they dare ;
 Death gathers in the air.

A wind blew sharp out of the north,
 And o'er the island-ridges rose
 A sound of tempest going forth,
 And murmur of approaching snows.
 Then through the sunlit air
 Streamed dark the lifted hair
 Of storm-cloud gathering for the light's eclipse,
 And fiercely rose and fell
 The shriek of waves, the knell
 Of seamen, and the doom of wandering ships ;
 As with an eagle's cry
 The mighty storm rushed by,
 Trailing its robe of snow across the wave,
 And gulfed them like a grave.

.
 EDMUND WILLIAM GOSSE.

IN MARCH.

WELCOME ! sweet wind ; you bring
 A soul of Spring
 From some far, fragrant rose,
 That blows
 In some dear, coming May, or half-forgotten Spring.

Welcome, sweet dream ; you bear
 Your wings of air
From some far isle of love,
 A dove,
Flying with gentle bough from some far, lovelier air.

What though the sweet wind knows
 A vanished rose —
(My dream the Past, alone,
 Has known),
Bloom from my heart, sweet dream ; climb from my
 dream, sweet rose !

JOHN JAMES PIATT.

SPRING FROM THY ROOT.

SPRING from thy root, sweet flower !
When so God wills, *spring even from thy root* ;
Send through the earth's warm breast a quickened
 shoot,
Spread to the sunshine, spread unto the shower,
And lift into the sunny air the dower
Of bloom and odor ; life is on the plains
And in the woods a sound of buds and rains
That sing together ; lo ! the winter's cold
Is past ! sweet scents revive, thick buds unfold.

DORA GREENWELL.
Declension and Revival.

THE RE-AWAKENING.

A VOICE upon the hillside wakes,
 A rill begins to laugh and leap,
 And nature starts, and stirs, and breaks
 The silence of her long, white sleep.

The soft white coverlet of snow
 That veils her lovely limbs and face
 She lightly flings aside, and so
 Arises in her vast, nude grace.

.

JAMES BENJAMIN KENYON.

WHEN THE YEAR IS YOUNG.

AND when the world is born again,
 And with some fair love, side by side,
 Thou wanderest 'twixt the sun and rain,
 In that fresh love-begetting tide ;

Then, when the world is born again,
 And the sweet year before thee lies,
 Shall thy heart think of coming pain,
 Or vex itself with memories ?

WILLIAM MORRIS.

The Life and Death of Jason.

SPRING.

SOFT-LITTERED is the new-year's lambing-fold,
 And in the hollowed haystack at its side
 The shepherd lies o' nights now, wakeful-eyed
 At the ewes' travailing call through the dark cold.
 The young rooks cheep mid the thick caw o' the old :
 And near unpeopled stream-sides, on the ground,
 By her spring-cry the moorhen's nest is found,
 Where the drained flood-lands flaunt their marigold.
 Chill are the gusts to which the pastures cower,
 And chill the current where the young reeds stand
 As green and close as the young wheat on land :
 Yet here the cuckoo and the cuckoo-flower
 Plight to the heart Spring's perfect imminent hour
 Whose breath shall soothe you like your dear
 one's hand.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

WHAT IS THE CHARM.

WHAT is the charm which wakes
 The bud, the flower, the fruit, from the cold ground ?
 What is the power which makes
 With song the groves, with song the fields, resound ?
 One spell there is, so strong to move ;
 Some call it Spring, and others Love.

LEWIS MORRIS.

Gwen.

A SONG OF A SPRINGTIME.

Too rash, sweet birds, spring is not spring ;
Sharp winds are fell in east and north ;
Late blossoms die for peeping forth ;
Rains numb, frost blights ;
Days are unsunned, storms tear the nights ;
The tree-buds wilt before they swell.
Frosts in the buds, and frost-winds fell :
And you, you sing.

But let no song be sweet but spring ;
Spring is but hope for after time,
And what is hope but springtide rime ?
But blights, but rain ?
Spring wanes unsunned, and sunless wane
The hopes false springtide bore to die.
Spring's answer is the March wind's sigh :
And you, you sing.

MRS. AUGUSTA [DAVIES] WEBSTER.

GIVE THE HEART FREEDOM.

GIVE the heart freedom ! Let the soul take wing
With the soft promise of the golden Spring ;
From book and study, forth ; — uplift the eye
To the blue beauties in the morning sky.

WILLIAM GILMORE SIMMS.
The Approach of Summer.

DAFFODILS.

AIRILY, fairily, floating and fluttering,
Daffodils, welcomest flowers of the year !
Ye come when the hoarse winds of March are still
muttering
Bleak o'er the snow-fleckered landscape drear.

Deep, deep in winter sleep Nature all wearily
Lay for long months, and so chill was her breath
That the cold of it crept to our heavy hearts drearily,
Hushing them, crushing them, nigh unto death !

Swing out your golden bells, beautiful daffodils !
Swing them and ring them among your green
spires !
Ring in the springtime ! ring in the life that thrills !
Wake to their love songs the wild woodland choirs.

He that hath ears to hear, pausing and listening,
Hears in his heart of hearts your mystic chime ;
Deep in his soul it thrills, while, with eyes glisten-
ing,
Unto your music his heart beats time.

Swing out your golden bells, sweet dainty daffodils !
Swing them and ring them, and ring them again !
Now is springtide with us,
Come to abide with us,
Lightening and brightening o'er valley and plain.

O'er the dark-shadowed hills, radiant daffodils !

Chase the dark gloom that chills, till it departs,

Pealing your mystic chime,

Ring in the glad springtime,

Life to all Nature, and joy to our hearts !

ROBERT MACAULAY STEVENSON.

PRIMROSES.

LATEST, earliest of the year,

Primroses that still were here,

Snugly nesting round the boles

Of the cut-down chestnut poles,

When December's tottering tread

Rustled 'mong the deep leaves dead,

And with confident young faces

Peeped from out the sheltered places

When pale January lay

In its cradle day by day,

Dead or living, hard to say,

Now that mid-March blows and blusters,

Out you steal in tufts and clusters,

Making leafless lane and wood

Vernal with your hardihood.

Other lovely things are rare,

You are prodigal as fair.

First you come by ones and ones,

Lastly in battalions,

Skirmish along hedge and bank,
Turn old Winter's wavering flank,
Round his flying footstep hover,
Seize on hollow, ridge, and cover,
Leave nor slope nor hill unharried,
Till, his snowy trenches carried,
O'er his sepulchre you laugh,
Winter's joyous epitaph.

This, too, be your glory great,
Primroses, you do not wait,
As the other flowers do,
For the Spring to smile on you,
But with coming are content,
Asking no encouragement.
Ere the hardy crocus cleaves
Sunny borders 'neath the eaves,
Ere the thrush his song rehearse
Sweeter than all poets' verse,
Ere the early bleating lambs
Cling like shadows to their dams,
Ere the blackthorn breaks to white,
Snowy-hooded anchorite ;
Out from every hedge you look,
You are bright by every brook,
Wearing for your sole defence
Fearlessness of innocence.
While the daffodils still waver,
Ere the jonquil gets its savor,
While the linnets yet but pair,
You are fledged, and everywhere

Naught can daunt you, naught distress,
 Neither cold nor sunlessness.
 You, when Lent sleet flies apace,
 Look the tempest in the face ;
 As descend the flakes more slow,
 From your eyelids shake the snow,
 And when all the clouds have flown,
 Meet the sun's smile with your own.
 Nothing ever makes you less
 Gracious to ungraciousness.
 March may bluster up and down,
 Pettish April sulk and frown ;
 Closer to their skirts you cling,
 Coaxing Winter to be Spring.

Then when your sweet task is done,
 And the wild-flowers, one by one,
 Here, there, everywhere do blow,
 Primroses, you haste to go,
 Satisfied with what you bring,
 Waning morning-star of Spring.
 You have brightened doubtful days,
 You have sweetened long delays,
 Fooling our enchanted reason
 To miscalculate the season.
 But when doubt and fear are fled,
 When the kine leave wintry shed,
 And 'mong grasses green and tall
 Find their fodder, make their stall ;
 When the wintering swallow flies
 Homeward back from southern skies,

To the dear old cottage thatch
Where it loves to build and hatch,
That its young may understand,
Nor forget, this English land ;
When the cuckoo, mocking rover,
Laughs that April loves are over ;
When the hawthorn, all ablow,
Mimics the defeated snow ;
Then you give one last look round,
Stir the sleepers underground,
Call the champion to awake,
Tell the speedwell courage take,
Bid the eyebright have no fear,
Whisper in the bluebell's ear
Time has come for it to flood
With its blue waves all the wood,
Mind the stitchwort of its pledge
To replace you in the hedge,
Bid the ladysmocks good-bye,
Close your bonnie lids and die ;
And, without one look of blame,
Go, as gently as you came.

ALFRED AUSTIN.

SUNSHINE IN MARCH.

WHERE are you, Sylvia, where ?
For our own bird, the woodpecker, is here,
Calling on you with cheerful tappings loud !
The breathing heavens are full of liquid light ;

The dew is on the meadow like a cloud ;
The earth is moving in her green delight,
Her spiritual crocuses shoot through,
And rathe hepaticas in rose and blue ;
But snowdrops that awaited you so long
Died at the thrush's song.

“ Adieu, adieu ! ” they said.

“ We saw the skirts of glory, and we fade ;
We were the hopeless lovers of the Spring,
Too young, as yet, for any love of ours ;
She is harsh, not having heard the white-throat sing ;
She is cold, not knowing the tender April showers ;
Yet we have felt her, as the buried grain
May feel the rustle of the unfallen rain ;
We have known her, as the star that sets too soon
Bows to the unseen moon.”

EDMUND WILLIAM GOSSE.

THE AIRS OF SPRING.

SWEETLY breathing, vernal air,
That with kind warmth doth repair
Winter's ruins ; from whose breast
All the gums and spice of the East
Borrow their perfumes ; whose eye
Gilds the morn, and clears the sky ;
Whose disheveled tresses shed
Pearls upon the violet bed ;

On whose brow, with calm smiles drest
The halcyon sits and builds her nest;
Beauty, youth, and endless spring,
Dwell upon thy rosy wing!

Thou, if stormy Boreas blows
Down whole forests when he blows,
With a pregnant, flowery birth,
Canst refresh the teeming earth.
If he nip the early bud;
If he blast what's fair or good;
If he scatter our choice flowers;
If he shake our halls or bowers;
If his rude breath threaten us,
Then canst stroke great Æolus,
And from him the grace obtain,
To bind him in an iron chain.

THOMAS CAREW.

TO A COUNTRY DAFFODIL.

WITH hanging head and fluted stalk,
A golden herald of the spring
Telling how thrushes build and sing
Amongst the laurels, in the walk
Where *we* have also loved and sung,

Come, daffodil, and whisper true
(Here amongst city fog and smoke,)

What tidings of our trysting oak,
 Where squirrels sport and pigeons coo,
 As though the world were ever young?
 Tell me how all your brethren fare,
 Upstanding in the garden beds;
 And if the snowdrops' modest heads
 Look earthwards yet, or high in air,
 And if the crocuses are there?

And if the forest glades are gay
 With hyacinths, or silver-strewn
 With wood-anemones, too soon
 That bow their heads and pass away,
 Dying the death of all things fair?

.
 MRS. MARY MONTGOMERIE [LAMB] SINGLETON.

THE BREATH OF SPRING.

. . . THE breath of spring had stirred the woods,
 Through which the joyous tidings busily ran,
 And oval buds of delicate pink and green
 Broke, infant-like, through bark of sapling boughs:
 The vapors from the ocean had ascended,
 Fume after fume, wreath upon wreath, and floor
 On floor, till a gray curtain upward spread
 From sea to sky, and both as one appeared.

RICHARD HENGIST HORNE.

Orion.

A SONG-SPARROW IN MARCH.

How much do the birds know, afloat in the air,
Of our changeable, strange human life and its care?

Who can tell what they utter,
With carol and flutter,
Of the joy of our hearts, or the pain hidden there?

In the March morning twilight I turned from a bed
Where a soul had just risen from a form lying dead:

The dim world was ringing
With a song-sparrow's singing
That went up and pierced the gray dawn overhead.

It rose like an ecstasy loosed from the earth;
Like a rapture repeating the song of its birth;
In that clear burst of gladness
Night shook off her sadness,
And death itself echoed the heavenly mirth.

While her sorrowful burden the sufferer laid by,
The little bird passed and caught up to the sky,
And sang to gray meadow
And mist-wreath and shadow
The triumph a mortal had found it to die.

Oh, the birds cannot tell what it is that they sing!
But to me must the song-sparrow's melody bring,
Whenever I hear it,
The joy of a spirit
Released into life on that dim dawn of spring.

LUCY LARCOM.

THE WIND'S MESSAGE.

I SAITH, "What wouldst thou with my soul to-night,
O wild March wind that wailest round the land?

Tell'st thou of some new grief even now at hand?
Or dost thou in thy swift, and sounding flight,
But chant a requiem for a past delight?

Like moan of billows on a distant strand,
Thy message which I fain would understand,
Comes down to me from heaven's starless height."

Then sadder wailed the wind, and sadder yet,
And swept with a great sudden rush of dole
Across me, till I cried, "My lady's soul

Is stirred by pity, and its currents set
To me-ward, and to me she bids thee say:
'Those prayed in vain, grieve more than those who
pray.'"

PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.

FLOWER FANCIES.

ERE blossom time had yet begun,
When grass scarce hid the brown earth's leanness,
And faggot hedgerows in the sun
Were slowly kindling into greenness,

I met a maiden, small and fair,
Along the cheerless highway bringing

Such flowery boughs as mortal ne'er
Hath seen from earthly tree-trunk springing.

Too eager to await the pledge
Of skies so fickle, trees so lazy,
She had broken thorn-sticks from the hedge
And tipped each prickle with a daisy.

Oh, little maid, whose pretty skill
Turns March to May so well and quickly,
Teach me thy craft ; — *my* wayward will
Hath made life's very daisies prickly.

WILLIAM CANTON.

WITH THE COMING OF SPRING.

IN the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the
robin's breast ;

In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself
another crest ;

In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the bur-
nished dove ;

In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to
thoughts of love.

ALFRED TENNYSON.
Locksley Hall.

THE AWAKENING YEAR.

THE bluebirds and the violets
Are with us once again,
And promises of summer spot
The hillside and the plain.

The clouds around the mountain tops
Are riding on the breeze,
Their trailing azure trains of mist
Are tangled in the trees.

The snowdrifts, which have lain so long,
Haunting the hidden nooks,
Like guilty ghosts have slipped away,
Unseen, into the brooks.

The streams are fed with generous rains,
They drink the wayside springs,
And flutter down from crag to crag
Upon their foaming wings.

Through all the long wet nights they brawl,
By mountain homes remote,
Till woodmen in their sleep behold
Their ample rafts afloat.

The lazy wheel that hung so dry
Above the idle stream,
Whirls wildly in the misty dark
And through the miller's dream.

Loud torrent unto torrent calls,
 Till at the mountain's feet,
 Flashing afar their spectral light,
 The noisy waters meet.

They meet, and through the lowlands sweep,
 Toward briny bay and lake,
 Proclaiming to the distant towns,
 "The country is awake!"

THOMAS BUCHANAN READ.

IN MARCH.

THE meadows shine new-washed, while here and
 there

A dusky patch of snow in sheltered paths
 Melts lonely. The awakened forest waves
 With boughs unplumed. The white investiture
 Of the fair earth hath vanished and the hills

.

Shine tawdry, crawled upon by the blind rain.
 Now Luggie thunders down the ringing vale,
 Tawnily brown, wide-leaving yellow sand
 Upon the meadow. The Southwest, aroused,
 Blustering in moody kindness clears the sky
 To its blue depths by a full-wingèd wind,
 Blowing the diapason of red March.

DAVID GRAY.
The Luggie.

THE BUGLE NOTES OF SPRING.

Now, Winter on his ice-bound car,
Is rattling north, o'er crag and scar ;
The thrush and blackbird cheery sing,
Blowing the bugle notes of spring :
 Saying, "Coming ! coming ! coming !
 The spring is coming, man, to thee !"

I've heard for many a year, ah me !
Those bugle notes so wild and free ;
And though each year its wrinkle throws,
That music aye the sweeter grows,
 Saying, "Coming ! coming ! coming !
 Perennial youth I bring with me."

The celandine's bright cup of gold
Is nestling by the brooklet cold ;
The coltsfoot to the warming days
Is streaming back its yellow rays :
 Saying, "Coming ! coming ! coming !
 Sweet Flora cometh, fair to see."

The chestnut bursts its shining hoods,
The poplar scents the leafing woods,
Where, cheerfully, among the boughs,
The birds are warbling tender vows,
 Saying, "Coming ! coming ! coming !
 And spend the summer, wild and free."

And my dull muse it fain would sing
Of the bonnie bugle notes of spring :

“O blackbird, in thy ecstasy,
Chant thy loud clarion cheerily!
While humming! humming! humming!
The woods repeat thy song for me.”

JAMES RIGG.

IN MARCH.

THE cock is crowing,
The stream is flowing,
The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,
The green field sleeps in the sun;
The oldest and youngest
Are at work with the strongest,
The cattle are grazing,
Their heads never raising;
There are forty feeding like one!

Like an army defeated
The snow hath retreated,
And now doth fare ill
On the top of the bare hill;
The plough-boy is whooping — anon — anon :
There's joy in the mountains;
There's joy in the fountains;
Small clouds are sailing,
Blue sky prevailing;
The rain is over and gone!

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

A MARCH EVENING.

THE boughs are black, the wind is cold,
And cold and black the fading sky;
And cold and ghostly, fold on fold,
Across the hills the vapors lie.
Sad is my heart, and dim mine eye,
With thoughts of all the woes that were;
And all that through the forward year,
Prophetic flit like phantoms by.
But, in the cheerless silence, hark,
Some throstle's vesper! loud and clear,
Beside his mate I hear him sing;
And sudden at my feet I mark
A daffodil that lights the dark, —
Joy, joy, 'tis here, the spring, the spring!
GEORGE MILNER.

A SUNDAY MORNING IN MARCH.

UPON a Sabbath morning sweet
Of March so bright and mild
It seemed like April stolen to meet
And soothe her brother wild,
I standing at my garden's side
Heard voices from above,
And looking up, with joy espied
The children of my love —

Four radiant cherubs in a row
Beside the casement bars,
Beyond them bluest heaven, below
The golden jasmine stars.
They stood and sang their angel hymn
In notes so fresh and true,
A sudden mist my eyes made dim
With tears of happiest dew.

ALFRED PERCEVAL GRAVES.

THE FLOWERING ALMOND.

YEAR after year, when winter has gone by
And London's smoke eclipses March's sky,
Spangling with rosy bloom the dusky air,
Its slender branches flowery burdens bear,
And none, methinks, did ever show more fair
In eastern gardens, or home pastures where
Thrush's soft trill and linnet's silvery note
Down golden alleys of warm sunlight float
From orchard choirs, hung o'er with ruddy snow,
To listeners, pillowed on green turf below.

Ah, dainty flowers! Right well ye testify
That 'twixt our sordid earth, our murky sky,
If man so will,
Things pure and fair and sweet may blossom still.

E. FULLER MAITLAND.

THE MILKMAID.

ACROSS the grass I see her pass ;
She comes with tripping pace,
A maid I know, and March winds blow
Her hair across her face ;
With a hey, Dolly ! ho, Dolly !
Dolly shall be mine,
Before the spray is white with May,
Or blooms the eglantine.

The March winds blow. I watch her go
Her eye is brown and clear ;
Her cheek is brown, and soft as down
(To those who see it near !)
With a hey, Dolly ! ho, Dolly !
Dolly shall be mine,
Before the spray is white with May,
Or blooms the eglantine.

What has she not that they have got,
The dames that walk in silk !
If she undo her kerchief blue,
Her neck is white as milk.
With a hey, Dolly ! ho, Dolly !
Dolly shall be mine,
Before the spray is white with May,
Or blooms the eglantine.

Let those who will be proud and chill !
For me, from June to June, ,

My Dolly's words are sweet as curds,
Her laugh is like a tune ;
With a hey, Dolly ! ho, Dolly !
Dolly shall be mine,
Before the spray is white with May,
Or blooms the eglantine.

Break, break to hear, O crocus-spear !
O tall Lent-lilies flame !
There'll be a bride at Eastertide
And Dolly is her name.
With a hey, Dolly ! ho, Dolly !
Dolly shall be mine,
Before the spray is white with May,
Or blooms the eglantine.

HENRY AUSTIN DOBSON.

SONG FOR SPRING.

LILAC clouds and purple-tinted branches,
Solid blues within the wintry sky,
Tawny browns o'er windy desolate marshes,
Gleams that blind where ice and snow-banks lie !
See, the violets call from out the grasses,
Look, the purple answers from the ground ;
Azure melts and to that warbler passes,
Sudden, a skyfleck on the fences found !
The turning year
Is here, here, here,

Daily the joyous hilltops run
Nearer, more near
To your high seat, O golden, glorious sun !

Angry winds that clashed their airy pinions
Round the homestead prune dead leaves away ;
Rains that stung when they were sleet or snowflake
Ease the buds that lurk below the day ;
For they know the one great god is coming,
Lord of all, whose hair disparteth gloom.
List to the south, — his herald bees are humming !
Lo, how his brow reddens the ocean spume !
His heart so hot
Has altered naught,
Now that the year around hath spun.
All hail be brought
To you, the god and giver of life, O sun !

Soon the molten gold that brings no sadness
Thick shall lie on pasture land and moor ;
Soon the broad, unstinted sun shall gladden
Gates of rich men, hovels of the poor :
Bat-winged moths, in boles of trees entombèd,
Feel the root-blood through the twigs aspire,
Stir impatient, sure their pinions humid
Soon shall dry before the all-fostering fire.
That Lord so good
Forgets no bud,
'Tis you, you, you whose charm has won
From yonder sod
To heaven that high and branching oak, O sun !

Birds by thousands far off groves are wending
Northward still their solitary way ;
Soon their mates will find them in each forest,
Field or marsh while yet the woods are gray.
Hear them laugh in liquid notes and cooing,
Watch them sail in airiest curving flight,
'Tis but earth the wondrous sun god wooing,
'Tis the darkness yearning for the light !
Wake to their voice
And take your choice,
Ye men and maidens every one ;
Rejoice, rejoice
With you, O gold-cord lover of earth, great sun !
CHARLES DE KAY.

MARCH.

Ho ! warrior month, my Martius, hail !
With battling breeze and clarion call
Thou rushest over hill and vale.
Before thee kneels the glowing year ;
Behind, thy glittering hosts appear.
To rescue earth from icy thrall
Thou comest, bravest month of all !

Dear, bustling March, my *Frühling*, come !
First month to-day, as first of old.
Thine the fresh song and wakened hum ;

Thine the glad rill's recovered flow,
And thine the stir the sod below.
Thy rap and tap and summons bold
Startle the earth from slumber's hold.

O month content ! My heart to thee !
No clamor now, no sudden throe,
The earth is roused ; her soul is free ;
How calm art thou, thy victory won,
How restful, in the restful sun !
The maiden April cometh slow,
Thou'lt greet her like a king and go.

MRS. MARY [MAPES] DODGE.

MADRIGAL.

WHEN primroses begin to peer,
Though distant hills be capped with snow,
And one stray thrush will carol clear
To snowdrops drooping all a-row ;
When building rooks caw as they pass,
And the sun gleams o'er misty plains,
Or melts the hoar-frost from the grass,
The blood runs brisker in the veins.
Then hey for the spring ! when the sweet birds
sing ;
Both lads and lasses love the spring.

When sunshine fills the keen March air,
And rain-flaws whirl across the lea,

And the day veers from foul to fair,
 And the sap runs in every tree ;
 When clouds go floating far and near,
 And coltsfoot buds in miry lanes,
 And all things feel the spring o' the year,
 The blood runs merrier in the veins.
 Then hey for the spring ! when the sweet birds
 sing ;
 Both lads and lasses love the spring.
JOHN TODHUNTER.

A MARCH SONG FROM SOMERSET.

As I went down by Taunton town,
 Pondering thoughts of pain,
 The very genius of the Spring,
 Came glancing up the lane :
 Azure eyes, soft and wise,
 A form of artless grace,
 Fluttering feet that skimmed the street
 Like swallows in the chase ;
 Upon her arm of rounded charm
 A mound of nodding flowers —
 A radiant crew all fresh with dew,
 From Quantocks' breezy bowers ;
 Primroses, daffodils,
 Into my heart they shone,
 And in their gleam of golden joy
 All my grief was gone.
ALFRED PERCEVAL GRAVES.

A BACCHIC OF SPRING.

*"Le beau Dionysos, dont le regard essuie
 Les cieux et fait tomber la bienfaisante pluie,
 Qui s'élance, flot d'or, dans les pores ouverts
 De notre terre et fait gonfler les bourgeois verts."*

THÉODORE DE BANVILLE.

OUT of the fields the snowdrops peep :

 "To work, O land !

Awake, O earth, from the white snow-sleep,

Shake off the coverlet soft and deep ;

 Spring is at hand !

Thou hast slumbered the months away long enough ;

'Tis time for the winter rude and rough

 To die and give way

 To the bloomy May :

 Awake and shake off the tyrant gruff !"

Up from the numbing clasp of the snow !

 Shake off the winter weather !

The breath of the year grows warm apace,

As the snowflakes melt from his fresh young face,

And the eastern moorlands are all aglow

 With the budding heather !

Already the swallows are calling, "cheep ! cheep !

All things are waking from their long sleep,

 We and the Spring together !"

See where the battle-host of the blooms

 Waits for the fray !

See where the cowardly tyrant glooms !

He knows the scent of those soft bright dooms,
That say to him, "Hence, away!"
Over the meadows their squadrons glitter,
Orange and purple and white and blue,
Jewel-helmed with the diamond-dew,
A fairy army of sweet spring roses,
Of bluebell-blossoms and pale primroses,
Spreads out its ranks in the balmy air,
Whilst the lark and linnet and blackbird twitter
A quaint war-march for each fairy Ritter,
That troops in the valleys fair!

Wearyful winter is gone at last,
With its wild winds sighing,
And the blooms of the spring are creeping fast:
Primrose and cowslip and windflower-bells
Broider the grass in the cool wood-dells;
Cloud-roses over the sky are flying.
Evoë! the chill of the year is dying!
Good-bye to the bitter blast!

Iö! the hillocks are mad with bliss,
As the new sweet stirring
Quickens their hearts with the vernal kiss!
Silver and azure and golden green
The meadows shine in the warm spring-sheen,
And the music of myriad wings is whirring,
As the birds that fled from the winter frore,
Back to the isle with the silver shore

Hasten from spice-forests far away
 In the Indian seas,
To revel in blossom-embroidered May,
As the flower-hosts chase out the winter gray
 From the newly wakened leas !
 Bacchus returns from the eastern skies !
(Welcome his train with their bright wood-sheen)
 Evoë ! he brings us the golden prize,
 The charm of the Indian queen
 He battled so long for and won at last !
He brings us the spell that unchains the flowers
And loosens the wheels of the golden hours
 When the power of the frost is waning fast,
When the chill snowflakes from the landscape fly,
And the dying east winds wearily sigh,
 “Alas ! our winter is past.”

See ! to the eastward his lance-points beam !
 Iö ! the time is near !
Evoë ! the winter wanes like a dream,
As the diamond helmets of the Bassarids gleam,
And the May-blooms glow in the sun's full stream,
 That glitters on every spear !
 Already I hear their voices' hum,
And the pipe and clang of their silver reeds,
And their songs of the spring-god's sweet flower-
 deeds,
As back from the golden East he leads
His seashell car with the tiger steeds !
 Evoë ! the spring is here !

Evoë, Lyæus ! the spring is here !
Onwards they come apace !
See how the landscape, bare and sere,
Flushes at once with a golden bliss,
As the earliest touch of the warm spring kiss,
Gilds with a tender grace
The grand old winter-enwounded trees,
That throb and sway in the balmy breeze,
Sweet from the flower-strewn plains,
As the radiant train of the wine-god sweeps
Through the inmost heart of the woodland deeps,
And the 'wildering thrill of the springtide creeps
Up through their frost dried veins !

JOHN PAYNE.

MORNING IN SPRING.

A SPRING of snow and sleet and rain
In this unlovely lifeless land,
And but the old work to do again,
The old walks and toils for foot and hand.
Summer is somewhere in the south,
Surely, and sleep and love and ease,
And murmurs of the singing mouth,
And ripple of still seas.

All sweet things lean towards the sun,
And come with summer, and depart ;
Sunshine and life and love as one,
Music and flowers and song and art.

Here in the sodden sullen dawn
The thin rain drizzles down like tears ;
The foul stream crawls through field and lawn
Where the mist never clears.

ARTHUR REED ROPES.

MAGDALEN WALKS.

THE little white clouds are racing over the sky,
And the fields are strewn with the flower of the
gold of March.

The daffodil breaks under foot, and the tasseled
larch

Sways and swings as the thrush goes hurrying by.

A delicate odor is borne on the wings of the morn-
ing breeze,

The odor of leaves, and of grass, and of newly
upturned earth,

The birds are singing for joy of the spring's glad
birth,

Hopping from branch to branch on the rocking trees.

And all the woods are alive with the murmur and
sound of spring,

And the rosebud breaks into pink on the clamber-
ing brier,

And the crocus-bed is a quivering moon of fire
Girdled round with the belt of an amethyst ring.

And the plane to the pine tree is whispering some
tale of love

Till it rustles with laughter and tosses its mantle
of green,

And the gloom of the wych-elm's hollow is lit with
the iris sheen

Of the burnished rainbow throat and the silver breast
of a dove.

See ! the lark starts up from his bed in the meadow
there,

Breaking the gossamer threads and the nets of
dew,

And flashing adown the river, a flame of blue,
The kingfisher flies like an arrow and wounds the
air.

OSCAR WILDE.

SPRING SONG.

INVISIBLE hands from Summer lands
Have plucked the icicles, one by one ;
And sly little fingers, reached down from the sun,
Lay hold on the tips of the grass in the sands.

And O, and O,

Where is the snow !

The crow is a-calling,

Showers are falling.

Ho, willow and weed ; each hidden seed,
Up, up and out of your garments gray :

The music of waters is heard in the mead,
And surly old Winter has hied him away!

And O, and O,
Where is the snow!
The snake is a-crawling,
Showers are falling.

JOHN VANCE CHENEY.
In the Century Magazine.

AFTER THE STORM IN MARCH.

HARK! how the wind sighs out of sight
Sorrow and warning.
It raged and wrestled in pain all night,
It sighs at morning.

The very trees where the wind did wreak
The wrongs of the city,
Groan and creak as they fain would speak
Pardon and pity.

Heart, keep silence; forebode no more
Warning and sorrow.
Who knows, the heavens may hold in store
Spring for to-morrow.

AGNES MARY FRANCES ROBINSON.
London Studies.

THE GIFT OF SPRING.

THROUGH weary winter he had wooed in vain,
 And sadly grieved that she should treat him so.
 In spring, he found, within her breast, had lain
 A budding love, — like arbutus in snow.

CHARLES MINER THOMPSON.

NOW THE NOISY WINDS ARE STILL.

Now the noisy winds are still ;
 April's coming up the hill !
 All the spring is in her train,
 Led by shining ranks of rain ;
 Pit, pat, patter, clatter,
 Sudden sun, and clatter, patter !
 First the blue, and then the shower ;
 Bursting bud, and smiling flower ;
 Brooks set free with tinkling ring ;
 Birds too full of song to sing ;
 Crisp old leaves astir with pride,
 Where the timid violets hide :
 All things ready with a will, —
 April's coming up the hill !

MRS. MARY [MAPES] DODGE.

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